LABOUR MONTHLY

A Magazine of International Labour

Editor: R. Palme Dutt

THE ATOM— FOR WAR OR PEACE?

by

J. D. BERNAL, F.R.S.

January 1950

Price: One Shilling

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

'TO OPEN A NEW AGE . . .'

Freedom, one of the greatest blessing of heaven,
United to peace, thou wilt work on this earth
Ten thousand wonderful new things . . .
In this century we are working to open a new age,
In this century, with one voice, all virile men
Are calling for a new making of heaven and earth.
Hin-Yun, our ancestor, guide us!
Spirit of Freedom, come and protect us!

(Battle Hymn of the first Chinese Revolution, 1912.)

HERE it is. We face 1950, with its problems and immense opportunities, with what an enthusiastic reader calls 'our bigger and better *Labour Monthly*'. Here it is, the improved tool with a cutting edge with which, in our way, we are 'working to open a new age'. A letter from another supporter of long standing wishing 'all the best in the world to our magazine, growing in size and content', must, I think, well describe the feelings of many. 'It's wonderful', she says, 'to think, as you say, that it is we who have made this possible—we supporters'. A Sussex reader, who writes sadly that he cannot afford to show his appreciation with a gift, adds: 'At least I will hope to help to increase the circulation'. Thanks, 'Sussex', that is indeed the way to celebrate with us. And one thing is certain, those who celebrate like that will find it a pleasure; for making new readers means new friends. The spirit of the letters we receive brings that home every day with their warm and, indeed, close personal ties they make between us. A very old friend of the magazine described this perfectly when he said to me: 'We are not only working for a cause; we are comrades with a basic unity of outlook which makes a tie stronger than relationship of blood'.

COMMON ENEMY, COMMON BOND

Or, indeed, of nationality, creed or colour. Consider this handful of letters from four countries, chosen from many that it has been often a pride and always of interest to receive lately. From Virginia, U.S.A.: 'Brought up in the democratic faith, after believing all my life that my country stood for Freedom, Justice and Liberty, it is almost beyond belief that it is today encouraging fascism all over the world. I have a strong feeling of personal kinship with you in England, which I find that English people do not have toward us at all; and I am sure they must loathe all Americans now'. No, not all, 'Virginia'. Nor even are all the British loathed by the peoples of the colonial countries which Britain's ruling class has pillaged for generations. It is true that for many the common bond is not found until the common enemy is seen. But that common enemy nevertheless exists, of whom it was written:

Continued on page 48

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Vol. XXXII. No. 1 CONTENTS January, 1950

Page

NOTES OF THE MONTH: The Sixth Decade, by R.P.D. 1
THE ATOM—FOR WAR OR PEACE?: by J. D. Bernal, F.R.S. 10
POIGNARD OF TRUTH TO MR. BEVAN: by Thomas Balmer 17
ABDICATION OF TRADE UNION RIGHTS: by Bryn Griffiths 23
NIGERIA'S BLOODY FRIDAY: by Barbara Ruhemann 26
A BATTLE FOR LIVES AT U.N.O.: by Pat Sloan 32
DOCUMENT OF THE MONTH 37
CARTOONS .. .. 38 & 39

Book Reviews:

India from Primitive Communism to Slavery, by S. A. Dange: *R.P.D.* 41
Tito's Plot Against Europe, by Derek Kartun: *James Klugmann* .. 44
Growing up into Revolution, by Margaret Cole: *G.A.H.* 45
Englishmen with Swords, by Montagu Slater: *A. L. Morton* 46
TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO 47

Notes of the Month

The Sixth Decade

WITH the end of 1949 we close the stormy record of the nineteen forties which have seen the greatest world triumphs of popular liberation and socialism since the victory of the Russian Revolution. The first decade of our century ushered in the era of imperialism and revealed all the contradictions, economic, social and inter-imperialist, which were approaching the point of explosion. The second decade brought the harvest of imperialism in world war and the opening of the general crisis of capitalism, which has ever since been the attendant spectre, the 'Nightmare Life-in-Death' of the old society through all our years, the collapse of the old rotting parliamentary Social-democracy, and the first decisive victory of the socialist revolution, opening the greatest change in human history. The third decade saw the triumph of the new Socialist Power against all its enemies abroad and at home, and the opening of the giant construction of the Five Year Plans, alongside the temporary dollar-propped stabilisation of the old capitalist world tottering into world economic crisis on a scale without parallel. The fourth decade witnessed the final completion of the first socialist society on earth, while the shattering economic crisis of the capitalist world threw up its dragon-brood in the foul pestilence of fascism and new world war. The fifth decade passed through the long-drawn ordeal, the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

agonies and the heroism of the War of Anti-Fascist Liberation, annihilated the military power of the fascist monster, thanks to the invincible strength of the Socialist State which saved humanity, and moved forward to the triumph of popular liberation over one third of the world, advancing under the leadership of Communism, at the same time as the remnants of the sick and diminished world of imperialism sought to gather their forces for a last barbarian onslaught. This is the moment reached at the mid-point of the century. With confidence, based on the record, no less than on the proved vindication of Marxist theory, we can pose the question: What will the Sixth Decade bring?

Landmarks of 1949

The past year has been a year of great changes over the world. With the opening of 1950 we approach a year of great decisions, both on a world scale, for the future of war or peace, and for the political future in Britain. 1949 will above all be remembered as the year of the final victory of Chinese liberation and the establishment of the People's Democratic Republic of China—representing the emancipation of one fifth of the human race, transforming the balance of world relations for the whole future, and inflicting the heaviest defeat on the American Warlords and the Anglo-American Holy Alliance since the inception of their ill-fated ' cold war '.

The Tables are Turned

Within a century of the infamous Opium War and piratical seizure of Hong Kong (our ' legal rights ', as Labour Government Ministers love to call it), the citizens of London are called on to line the streets to celebrate the escape of a gunboat from China; while the arch-architect of the ' cold war ', Kennan, resigns from the State Department after the shipwreck of his policies. 1949 has been the year of triumph of Soviet post-war economic reconstruction, with the prospect of the completion of the first post-war Five Year Plan in four years, and a level of production, not only wiping out the colossal war destruction, but already reaching fifty per cent. above pre-war, at the same time as the beginnings of economic crisis and lowered levels spread over the capitalist world. Soviet mastery of atomic energy for constructive aims has cast consternation in the camp of the atom bomb maniacs. 1949 has seen the ascending victories of economic recovery and rising levels in the new democracies of Eastern Europe, at the same time as the Marshall satellite countries of Western Europe writhe in the growing contradictions of the fiasco of the Marshall Plan. 1949 has been the year of the establishment of the German Democratic Republic, opening the way forward for a united democratic Germany, the key to peace for Europe. 1949 has been the year of the Paris Peace Congress, mobilising a world peace

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

movement on a scale never before equalled against the plans for a new war.

Reaction in 1949

At the same time the camp of reaction has pursued its aggressive and disruptive activities throughout the year. For them 1949 has been above all the year of the Atlantic Pact—the War Pact which is designed to turn the United Nations Charter into a scrap of paper, and replace it by an old-style sectional military coalition, with powers to let loose war by the decision of its signatories without authorisation of the Security Council of the United Nations. The whole year has seen the comings and goings of the American military chiefs parading over their vassal countries in Western Europe, imposing their strategic plans to lay the main burdens on the European peoples, and preparing the shipment of arms to Europe and dollars for arms in return for mercenary bondage. 1949 has been the year of the enthronement of the old Hitlerite industrialist-militarist clique as a West German 'State' under an American-controlled Occupation Statute, in order to make the Ruhr the American-dominated industrial base for Western Europe, draw Western Germany into the war plans for Western Europe, and prepare the rearmament of Western Germany. 1949 has been the year of the throwing off of the mask of the Tito police agents of Anglo-American imperialism in Yugoslavia, now openly backed by American dollars and equipment (statutorily refused to any 'Communist-controlled' Government), and pushed by American satellite votes on to the Security Council of the United Nations.

Disrupters and Splitters

In the sphere of the labour movement, corresponding to the offensive of Anglo-American imperialism in the diplomatic-strategic sphere, 1949 has been the year of the attempted disruption of international trade unionism by the breakaway from the World Federation of Trade Unions on the part of the minority of Anglo-American lieutenants of imperialism to found a so-called 'Free' Trade Union International ('free', as the B.B.C. announcer blandly explained, in the sense of 'free from Communism'—certainly not free in any other sense; indeed, 'free labour' has always been the age-old slogan of anti-trade unionism). 1949 has further seen the shift of Governments to the Right in the American-dominated area, with the Social-democratic agents often thrown over for the moment as used linen, as in Belgium, with the replacement of a Social-democratic by a Clerical Government, in Western Germany, with the eclipse of Schumacher before Adenauer, or in Australia and New Zealand with the replacement of Labour Governments by Governments of the Right.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Britain in 1949

What of Britain? It is only necessary to survey the record of the year to see the extent to which surrender to American reaction and the war policy has entailed the advance of reaction at home and economic deterioration. The year began with the new inflated arms estimates, leaping to a figure of £760 million (still further increased in the spending), or six times the figure for the corresponding year after the first world war; the accompanying lash of Cripps' Budget, placing additional burdens equivalent to a net £68 million on the people, while relieving the rich of taxation equivalent to a net gain of £58 million; and the immediately following Labour losses in the local elections. The Labour Party Executive continued the expulsion of left critics, and imposed on the Blackpool Conference a programme of retreat which was not submitted to votes or amendment. May Day saw the banning of the traditional working class march in London, as in Madrid. The Transport and General Workers' Union imposed a ban on democratic majority election of Communists as officials. In face of the unbroken solidarity struggle of the London dockers the Labour Government brought in the troops and invoked the Emergency Powers Act (which at the time of its original passing the Labour Party had officially denounced and repudiated as infamous anti-working class legislation).

Through Devaluation to Disaster

The later months of the year carried still further the record of the earlier months. As the fiasco of the Marshall Plan revealed the chronic dollar crisis rising again to new heights in the summer, the hard-faced Snyder flew to London to lay down the law to Cripps, who retired prostrate to Switzerland, and returned to eat his words and accept the American demand for devaluation. Following the humble pilgrimage of Bevin and Cripps to the Mecca of Washington to receive their orders, the devaluation of the pound was announced to the startlingly low figure of $2.80—equivalent to an all-round cut of wages and standards estimated by the economic experts as likely to reach a level of 7 to 10 per cent., and inaugurating a new ferocious trade war for the shrinking dollar market, at the same time as offering the assets of the empire for cut-price dollar purchase.

Another Turn of the Screw

Even this reduction of standards was not enough for the demands of American and British Big Business. There followed the Attlee cuts in the autumn, to reach a total of £250 million, mainly at the expense of capital development, housing, food subsidies, health and education. Big Business demanded more. The call was sounded for longer hours. Steel 'nationalisation' was postponed. The insurance monopolies were reprieved. The Trades Union Congress, which had accepted

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the wage-freeze only as a part of a policy of supposed ' stability of wages, prices and profits ', and with the bait of a promise of lower prices in the near future, was now called on to accept the freezing of wages alongside rising prices, profits and production—that is, to make the trade unions instruments for imposing acceptance of lower real wages. Even this ignominy was finally accepted by the General Council majority, but in the face of rising revolt among the main unions. All these sacrifices were imposed in the name of recovery through devaluation and lower costs for the dollar export drive. Yet at the same time the certainty of further large increases of arms expenditure consequent on the Atlantic Pact was announced. And while the aim was proclaimed to quadruple dollar exports as the only way to overcome the gap, the November dollar export figures showed a level below the average of 1948 and early 1949. It was evident that the prospect was developing for new and deepened forms of crisis in 1950.

Advance of the Mass Movement

It would be false to present this black picture as the total picture of Britain in 1949. On the contrary, the significant first signs of stirring of the workers' struggle against these conditions made themselves manifest in 1949. The London 'bus strike at the beginning of the year, the Lancashire miners' strike in the early summer, the epic struggle of the dockers of Avonmouth, Liverpool and London, no less than the nation-wide movement of protest which forced the release of Eisler, revealed the beginnings of a movement which was finding its way forward in the face of official threats, legal bans, hamstrung trade union machinery, and the whole apparatus of the press, broadcasting, Government pressure and the right-wing leadership which was brought into action against it. In vain the General Council demanded the abandonment of wage claims by the unions. The millions of railwaymen, miners, engineering and shipbuilding workers, and other key sections of the industrial workers, continued their demands; and the pressure of the membership compelled the union machinery to challenge in practice, even if not yet in articulate expression of policy, the mandates of the General Council. In the political field the formation of the Labour Independent Group by the handful of Labour M.P.s who had faced expulsion rather than sacrifice the principles of the labour movement, formed the first crystallisation of left revolt, whose principles courageously expressed the outlook of far wider numbers still held prisoner by fear of the machine. The Communist Party Congress, its decision to place one hundred candidates in the field, and its adoption of the programme ' The Socialist Road for Britain ', presented the alternative policy to the policy of capitulation. Thus the conditions were gathering in 1949 for the certain advance and extension of the struggle to new and wider forms in 1950.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Australian Election Lessons

In face of the approaching general election in Britain in 1950, which will be of such far-reaching importance for future political development in Britain and the world, it is essential to draw the lesson of the Australian and New Zealand general elections with the defeat of the Labour Governments. What caused the defeat of the Labour Governments in these countries? Not the 'split vote' (Australia has the advantage of the alternative vote, and the Labour Party leaders misused it to call on their followers to cast their second vote for capitalist candidates against the Communists, thereby making possible the narrow voting majority of the reactionary capitalist parties). Not Communist influence or left policies. These were right-wing Labour Governments. These right-wing Labour Governments sought to compete with the parties of the propertied interests in demonstrating their hostility to Communism and the left. They sought to proclaim themselves more efficient upholders of the existing social order than their rivals of the open capitalist parties. They jailed the Communists. They sent the troops against the miners on strike. Thereby they expected to receive the reward of continued office from a grateful bourgeoisie. On the contrary. The old truth was once again demonstrated that, when the Social-Democrats turn their fire on the militant working class in the interests of reaction, they prepare finally their own demise at the hands of triumphant reaction. They do not win over the bourgeoisie, who use them only so long as they are useful. But they disorganise and demoralise their own supporters; they split and divide the labour movement; they penalise its best fighters; they take the heart out of the mass of the labour movement who were looking to them for decisive social changes. Thus they prepare the way and lay down the red carpet for the return of Toryism.

A Warning for Britain

This is the lesson which must be learned in Britain. The rout of Toryism in Britain can only be assured if the class spirit of the workers is aroused, as it was aroused in 1945, and as it has been shamefully denied, damped down, and frustrated by the reactionary policies of these intervening years, thus alone making possible the loudly advertised and shameless endeavours of defeated and discredited Toryism to stage a come-back. *It is Right-Wing Labour policy that plays into the hands of Tory revival.* This is above all the lesson of the Australian and New Zealand elections. And that is why the Communist Party compaign in Britain, despite all the hindrances of an undemocratic voting system, represents in fact the spearhead of the fight to prevent a Tory come-back.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Contrast

It is impossible to survey the record of the years since the war without observing how great is the contrast with the years since the first world war. Four and a-half years after the first world war the revolutionary tide was approaching its ebb, with the last flare-up in Germany. The Soviet Union, victorious over the wars of intervention, was nevertheless hemmed within frontiers which had to submit to the tearing away of whole territories and peoples from the revolution by foreign armed force, and which were to remain unchanged till 1939. The ' cordon sanitaire ' of reactionary puppet States had been established in Eastern Europe. The greater part of China was held down under the War Lords. India had been led to defeat by Gandhi. American intervention in Western Europe was only beginning to prepare its Dawes Plan. The bitter experience of the Labour Governments in Britain was still in front. Today, four and a-half years after the second world war, the advance of liberation, so far from ebbing, is increasing its momentum. The liberation of China is pointing the way forward to the liberation of all Eastern Asia. All Africa is in ferment. The Marshall Plan of American intervention in Western Europe has already reached its fiasco. In place of temporary stabilisation, new economic crisis on a scale comparable with 1929-31 is visibly gathering. The exposure of the Third Labour Government has reached its full term. The feverish arms race of imperialism eclipses the level of the 'thirties. Thus the whole tempo of development is enormously speeded up, as we enter the decisive sixth decade.

Confusion of the Imperialist Camp

This accelerated advance of the peoples throughout the world, and shipwreck of the successive plans and manœuvres of reaction, has thrown the camp of imperialism into confusion. Slowly the first glimmer of realisation begins to filter through the skulls of the Achesons, Marshalls, Kennans and Bevins (even if not yet of the Montgomerys, McCloys, MacArthurs and stupider brasshats) that they are no longer masters to control the destinies of the world. China taught that lesson, and two thousand pages of the American Report bear witness to it. Their policy is bankrupt in relation to China; they still fumble over recognition, and grope to find new means to hold in Eastern Asia. The economic contradictions of the disequilibrium of the dollar world and capitalist Europe defeat their clumsy surgery; and they watch the developing economic crisis as hopefully as the rabbit watches the snake.

" Historic Error "

Above all, in the strategic sphere the Soviet mastery of atomic energy has brought tumbling down all the vainglorious Fulton calculations of swashbuckling world dictatorship:

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mr. Truman, Mr. Attlee and certain ranking strategists allowed themselves to believe that Russia would not have the bomb until 1957. The disastrous consequences of this historic error of judgment have not yet been made public.

This miscalculation became the foundation of all strategic planning. The result is that almost every plan made and conceived has proved insufficient or useless.

(Review of World Affairs, December, 1949.)

The lamentations would be even louder if these economic dunderheads of world strategists were capable of realising that the Soviet mastery of atomic energy for productive purposes will prove a hundred times more significant in terms of real strength for the future than the mere pricking of the atom bomb myth.

War Frenzy

But this successive shipwreck of the plans and miscalculations of reaction, this ever more visible shift of the historical balance on the side of the advance of popular liberation and socialism, and this increased weakening of the camp of imperialism, does not yet mean a diminution of the dangers arising from the last representatives of the old order. On the contrary, as their desperation increases, so their frenzy grows more furious to find a violent solution, sober calculations are thrown to the winds, and the danger of the reckless gambler's throw is ever present. This is the significance of the warning sounded in the resolution of the Conference of the eight European Communist Parties of the Communist Information Bureau in November:

It would be mistaken and harmful for the cause of peace to underestimate the danger of the new war that is being prepared by the imperialist Powers, headed by the United States of America and Britain. . .

The experience of history teaches that the more hopeless the cause of imperialist reaction, the more it rages, the greater grows the danger of military adventures.

The successive checks to the plans of imperialism, so far from leading as yet to a sober re-assessment of their whole strategy of the 'cold war' and turn to an alternative policy, are leading at the present moment to an intensification of the drive to war. It is characteristic that, at the very moment of the most critical point of Britain's economic difficulties, and the imposition of the heaviest burdens and sacrifices on the people, to pay for a colossal inflated military expenditure, plans should be in preparation, according to the Labour M.P., Crossman, to raise that expenditure of £800 million this year to £1,200 million next year. The fight for peace against these war plans more and more dominates the entire economic and political situation. In no country is this more true than in Britain.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Towards the Battles of 1950

For Britain the coming year will be a year of great decisions for the whole future, and will see the extension of economic and political struggle to new forms. With the completion of the five years of the Labour parliamentary majority a whole cycle of political experience has been completed, corresponding in significance, at a much more advanced stage of development, to the comparable Liberal majority of 1906 and its outcome. Within these five years Social-democracy in Britain, under the whip of the crisis, under the control of American finance and its war plans, has passed through the whole gambit from social reforms and concessions to becoming the instrument of imposing cuts upon the workers and standing out as the fighter against their advance. In the coming elections the workers will be faced with the twofold task, to rout Toryism in all the constituencies, and at the same time to draw the lesson of the experience of the Labour Government and carry forward the political advance begun in 1945 by rallying to the Communist banner in the hundred constituencies where Communists are standing and returning a reinforced representation of Communists and Labour Independents to parliament. In the field of industry the battle over wages and hours, against the wage-freeze and against the employers' offensive, and for the workers' advance and the working class policy to combat the crisis, will open out on a mass scale, as the indications of the closing weeks of 1949 are already pointing the way forward. Above all, in the fight for peace it will be necessary to mobilise the broadest sections of the people, in order to defeat the plans of the American millionaires and their British collaborators for the economic and political subjection and ultimate war destruction of Britain, and to win the way forward to the new Britain, in which the British people will be able to advance with the peoples of the world towards the common aims of peace and social emancipation.

R.P.D.

December 14, 1949.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE ATOM — FOR WAR OR PEACE?

J. D. BERNAL, F.R.S.

THE announcement by President Truman on September 22nd, 1949, that the Soviet Union now possessed an atomic weapon has marked a decisive turning point in post-war international relations. The intention of the announcement at the time it was made was obvious. It was to blow up again the smouldering ashes of the cold war: to encourage Congress to vote a record arms bill, including a new contribution for Atlantic Pact countries, and to stiffen its attitude against yielding to any Soviet 'peace offensive' in the United Nations Assembly. In all these objectives the backers of the United States war policy were successful—but at a cost which has yet to be reckoned—the cost of showing to the world that they have lost their imagined atomic supremacy while they have still no intention of accepting a peaceful solution of world differences.

For with the knowledge of the possession of an atom bomb by the Soviet Union, it is now more clear than ever that agreement to ban atomic weapons is the touchstone of genuinely peaceful intentions. Before then it could be argued that the Soviet Union, lacking an atom bomb, had as good a reason for insisting on its prohibition as the United States had for retaining it as a blackmailing weapon. The fact that, having the bomb, the U.S.S.R. still insists as vehemently as ever on its policy of destroying existing stocks and of controlling any further military use of atomic energy, is an earnest of its desire for peace. On the other hand, the response of the government of the United States, ably seconded by the government of Britain and all its other satellites, in refusing all compromise, shows plainly that they have learned nothing and are still bent on war. For what has already started in the last few months is another arms race with the atom bomb, though no longer eclipsing all other weapons, still well to the fore.

In fact until the question of the control of atomic energy is settled, all other questions of disarmament and ultimate agreement between the great powers must hang in the balance. Without agreement on the bomb, there is no sense in any agreement to reduce conventional arms or armies, and without that there is little hope of ending the cold war through international agreement. This has been made quite clear by the motions put by Mr. Vyshinsky to the United Nations Assembly, of which we have been allowed to learn very little in this country and which were rejected virtually without examination by Mr. Acheson and Mr. Bevin. Yet there has never been a time at

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which a lasting agreement on the use and control of atomic energy could more easily be reached. Most of the ground for the old objections, in particular the key one of secrecy, has disappeared. The United States has far less to lose and, indeed, now much to gain by agreement not to use the bomb.

Of course, a whole barrage of propaganda is being put up in the United States and here, that it is the Soviet Union, by refusing to accept the Baruch proposals, that is holding up agreement. Mr. Douglas, who would not appear to have heard the Soviet atom explosions, said only last month (November 30th, Royal Society dinner):

> So long as one of the important nations of the world—a wartime ally——resists by every technique of casuistry and every device of deceitful dialectics and refuses to submit to precisely the same substantive and effective international controls on nuclear energy to which we of the Western world are anxious to submit ourselves, we must meticulously guard from her prowling secret agents and her subversive cadres the mass of technical lore that we have been able to accumulate.

Mr. Vyshinsky, in his masterly analysis of the American proposals, explains exactly why these controls are only acceptable to countries already dominated by the United States politically and economically, which now form a majority of the present United Nations, and are wholly unacceptable to any country determined to maintain its independence.

> The refusal of the Soviet representatives to accept such a plan, a plan which would place the fate of any state and its economic and political independence at the will and mercy of the so-called international control agency, is depicted by the most worthy five as a refusal to agree to international co-operation and as a rejection of international atomic control.

Basically, his objections are that the plan proposes the vesting of the ownership of all atomic energy raw-materials and products from the moment they leave the mine in an Atomic Development Authority (A.D.A.). This Authority, which would be controlled by the United States, through the majority it could always find among its client states, would determine how they would be shared between the nations and how used under its direction in each country. This is equating Atomic Energy control with the permanent dominance of world capitalism.

How would it, in fact, be possible to reconcile the uses to which atomic energy is put in the United States and in the Soviet Union? In the former we see well enough how the control operates through the great monopoly enterprises of Carbide and Carbon, Monsanto, General Electric and Westinghouse. They are as little likely to allow atomic energy to be used under A.D.A. for the benefit of the peoples of the world, particularly those of the U.S.S.R. and China, as they have shown themselves eager to share out their own record profits

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to their workers or the American public. In fact the use of atomic energy for peace in the United States hardly exists except for a few grammes of tracer material that is grudgingly spared for biological and medical purposes.

The reasons for this are, firstly, that big business in the United States is not at all anxious, especially just now, to have a new competitor enter the power field* and, secondly, that the war uses of atomic energy which provide profits in production without any awkwardness in disposing of the product, are so much more attractive.

Lawrence R. Hafstad (Director of Reactor Development, U.S. A.E.C.) in an article in the November Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, after some rather naive operational research calculations based on the amount of destruction it can cause, estimates that one bomb is ' worth ' $400,000,000, and, as it must cost much less than this, the bomb is by far the most *profitable* use for fissile materials. He goes on:

> We should think twice or maybe even three times before permitting too casual diversions of material from the stockpile, even for other conceivable military uses. It follows also that civilian power will remain ' pie in the sky ' unless, by a ' break ' in the breeder program or some other solution to the raw material problem, a more ample supply of fissionable material can be provided. Finally, it follows that this is indeed a game in which, if we are to play at all, we play with ' blue chips '.

Thus atomic energy in the United States is likely to be left exclusively to big business operating for the military. Whether this will lead to its efficient development is another question. The flight of the scientists from the threat of ' security ' and ' loyalty ' investigations and the resignation of Mr. Lilienthal himself, the architect of the whole venture, despairing of any semblance of civil control, suggests that the A.E.C. will soon degenerate into military mediocrity punctuated from time to time by appalling financial scandals. The bombs will still roll out and the people of the United States will be poorer and considerably more insecure and frightened than they are now.

The contrast of this situation with that in the Soviet Union could not be more striking. There, from the very first burst, atomic energy has been usefully employed. It would be good to know the details of the great scheme for irrigating the Aral-Caspian depression by diverting the water of the Siberian mountains over the divide that separates them. But in the present state of the world it would be altogether too much to expect that we should. These schemes must offer too many targets for anything to be allowed out as to the precise location of their principal works. Indeed the Soviet Union has

*For a recent economic appraisal showing the unlikelihood of the use of atomic energy in the United States, see S. H. Shurr in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, Nov., '49.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

already made a great gesture of confidence in peace by exposing itself in undertaking them at all. Nor is this, though a most important instance, the only sign of this confidence. In rebuilding Moscow and all the other cities of the Union there has been no regard at all for the danger of atomic bombs.

Naturally the enemies of the Soviet Union try to prove that the claims to the peaceful use of atomic explosions are pure propaganda: that it is scientifically impossible to carry out such a plan. True, in the form in which it has been semi-officially revealed, the plan is breath-taking in its scale and imagination, but the more one examines it the more fundamentally practicable it appears. The two great rivers of Siberia, the Ob and the Yenisei, drain an area from Lake Baikal to the Urals, larger than the whole of Europe, but flowing north they carry their waters to the inhospitable arctic tundra. Their lower channels are wide and shallow and are fringed by miles of useless marsh. By damming them these could be converted into a vast lake which would fringe the whole of the grain area of central Siberia. To the south-west lie low desert hills cut down at one place by an ancient river valley to a height of about 500 feet above sea level. By deepening this valley, the whole of the Siberian water could be made to flow into wide plains, at present desert but once fruitful, fringing the Aral sea and the Caucasus. These could, given water, support populations, not measured in millions but in hundreds of millions.

Atomic explosives can well have played a part in the first stages of this great enterprise. One moderately efficient bomb could shift at least 40 million tons of rock and thus cut a deep gash through hills a few hundred feet high, and there is available certainly more than one bomb. As to radioactive dangers, the area involved is totally deserted and the short-life fission products can be given several years to decay before the scheme is advanced enough to need occupation of the site or use of water passing through it. Further processes involving the recovery of valuable longer term products, including unsplit plutonium or uranium, should not be too difficult to devise.

In this and possibly in other ways, Soviet engineers are already using atomic energy. To them American control could only be obstructive. As Vyshinsky says:

> We use atomic energy for our economic plans, in our economic interests. We have set atomic energy to perform great tasks of peaceful construction, we want to put atomic energy to use in levelling mountains, changing the course of rivers, watering deserts and laying new life lines in places where the foot of man has rarely stepped. This is what we, the masters of our land, are doing under our plan, and we shall not in this matter subordinate ourselves or render account to any international agencies.

There is in addition another reason why the Soviet Union finds

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the American scheme unacceptable. This is the ingenious system of stages by which the scheme was supposed to be brought into operation. Under this system other countries would have to submit to inspection and control by the American dominated commission before the United States government itself agreed to destroy its stocks of bombs *but there was no guarantee that it should do so.* Indeed in the Acheson-Lilienthal memorandum quoted by Mr. Vyshinsky it was expressly stated:

> The plan does not require that the United States shall discontinue such manufacture either upon the proposal of the plan or upon the inauguration of the international agency. At some stage in the development of the plan this is required, but neither the plan nor our transmittal of it should be construed as meaning that this should or should not be done at the outset or at any other specific time.

It is therefore not surprising that the Soviet Union should have found this plan, which would in fact have placed the development of its economy under American control, without giving it any security against bomb attacks from America, absolutely unacceptable even before they had the bomb. Now it has ceased to make any sense, as the advantages the plan offered—technical know-how and the possible use of atomic energy—have been obtained without it. The United States and British governments only cling to it as a means of stalling off any kind of restriction on bomb manufacture.

The alternative plan proposed by the Soviet Union now on the basis of technical equality is both fairer and simpler. It proposes the simultaneous signing of an agreement to stop production and destroy stocks of atomic bombs and one to set up a control commission with power of inspection to see that no others are made. It is a lie to say, as has been said officially in the press here and in America, that the Soviet Union refuses inspection of atomic plants—it specifically proposes it. The technical differences on this score between permanent and periodic inspection, could easily be overcome by negotiation and are in any case too small to hold up agreement on this all important matter—if agreement is really wanted.

But is it wanted? *The Times,* in its editorial on November 19th, admits effectively that it is not, for since 'The Western Plan is clearly unattainable at present the choice is really between the Russian plan and no plan at all. There can be no doubt that the Western powers are right in saying that in that case they must prefer no control'.

What does this rejection mean? It means an intensification rather than a mere continuation of the cold war. As General Omar Bradley† cheerfully predicted in his speech on 'Red Atom Day', 'a new phase in our struggle for peace would begin'.

---

†From an address to the American Forestry Association, *New York Times,* October 12th, 1947.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

As the previous stages in the American struggle for peace had been marked by the Truman policy of armed aid for fascism in Greece and Turkey, the Marshall Plan to make Western Europe safe from Communism, and the Atlantic Pact, designed, according to Representative Cannon, so that 'other nations can send their boys into the holocaust, so we won't have to send our boys', we may well imagine what to expect from the next stage. The new line is not —abolish the atom bomb, but—produce four bombs to one. Even the liberal ex-director Lilienthal is supporting this solution, though the anonymous American journalist quoted by Vyshinsky said 'it was poor arithmetic to threaten to shoot a man twice when he can shoot you once'.

General Bradley and the Chiefs of Staff have already moved into their next stage in the cold war. Negotiations are going on with the British and Canadians for a closer atomic tie-up. It is understood (*Sunday Times,* December 11th) that we are being persuaded to leave atomic bomb production to the United States in exchange for more know-how. If we agree, our independence in atomic matters, already slight, will disappear for good. One of the results, no doubt, will be still further integrations of American and British science and the introduction of notorious American security methods. Another example of the same tendency is the persistent attempt to oust Professor Joliot-Curie from the French Atomic Energy Commission (which is the only place in Western Europe where atomic energy is being made solely for peaceful purposes), so as to make it subsidiary to the United States. But that is a small part of the price we are paying for the cold war.

To American bosses the cold war with its $24,000,000,000 of useless expenditure is good business. As Senator Edwin Johnson, of Colorado, speaking to the United States Chamber of Commerce, said: 'Without the cold war, the present economic situation in the United States really would be alarming and there would be hell to pay'.

Nevertheless, the cold war is at best a short term solution for sustaining a failing economy. The 24 billion dollars cold war expenditure looks small against $120 billion or more for a hot war, but American capitalism will face that cheerfully when it comes—if the American people will let it.

For us in this country the atomic arms race means first ruin and then suicide. If we exert ourselves so strenuously in 'defence', we would in a few months complete the breakdown of our social services which our Tories are clamouring for. Not only that, but by starving industry of capital and provoking unemployment, we would ruin our industrial competitive position and let the United States capitalists into our remaining markets. Then at last would we be where they want us, having lost the last shred of our independence and having

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

very conveniently discredited the idea of Socialism in the process. The next step would be war—with Britain the unsinkable aircraft carrier as the first target. We should realise that Britain is cast for a key rôle in an atomic war. Already we have United States bases on our soil, specially equipped for atom bomb attack. The whole United States war plans depend on these bases for rapidly mounted attacks on the cities of the Soviet Union.

Our only escape from such a fate is to make the people of this country realise the folly and wickedness of this policy and to force its government towards the alternative policy of peace, of which the first step is an atomic energy agreement. This is the policy which is being pressed so successfully by the great movement of the Partisans of Peace. By vast demonstrations, by millions of votes given to the Peace ballot, they have shown that the peoples of Europe, particularly those of France and Italy, will not take part in an aggressive war against the Soviet Union, which is the real object of the Atlantic Pact. With sufficient backing by the forces of peace in this country they can show even governments that the atomic war policy will not work.

Responsible opinion in this country is beginning to turn in this direction. The Atomic Sciences Committee of the Association of Scientific Workers have recently issued a statement on the new position on atomic energy, and conclude:

> The alternative is that we should refuse to be pushed into an arms race, but should make additional and much more energetic attempts, as a first step, to reach a compromise but reasonably effective scheme for the international control of atomic energy. The whole situation demands such a compromise solution. The moderate tone of the recent Soviet official announcement on the development of atomic energy inside her borders, makes it clear that there is no desire on her part to engage in an arms race. The new situation, therefore, is one in which Britain can with considerable hope of success press for such an agreement as is here outlined.

The future depends on how rapidly and effectively the people of this country, and especially the Labour movement, for which peace is still an ideal, can be rallied against the new atom bomb race and can seize the opportunity for a fair agreement that has been given us by the Soviet possession of atomic energy.

If we do, then the main obstacles to a more general peace settlement would be removed, and there is hope that we ourselves as well as the people of the Soviet Union can find in the atom a blessing and not a curse.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

POIGNARD OF TRUTH TO MR. BEVAN

THOMAS BALMER

APOLOGISTS for the record of the Labour Government feel so sure they have at least one good, firm plank on their quaking platform when the housing question is raised, that we are likely to hear a terrific din about three-quarter million new homes since 1945 and not much about anything else.

No one contests that the number of new houses produced has been a bigger achievement in four years from 1945 than what was done under Conservative Government in four years from 1918. But intelligent voters will question whether enough has been accomplished in relation to need and to available resources. They will question the degree of fulfilment attained of Labour's 1945 election programme. Above all else, they will question what fruits may be anticipated from the current housing policy of the expiring Government, for the 1950 election programme *Labour Believes in Britain* conveys nothing positive whatever.

It is a sad and easy task to show how little of the programme set forth in 1945 in *Let Us Face The Future* has been carried out. There the Labour Party promises to undertake drastic action to ensure an efficient building industry; to prevent restrictive price rings; to introduce modern methods and materials; to maintain a due balance between housing, schools and factories (commercial work and private work are not mentioned); to institute centralised purchasing and price control; and to create a Ministry of Housing and Planning. All these are set forth as necessary to achieve the aim of providing ' every family in this island ' with ' a good standard of accommodation '.

Not a single one of these necessary measures is under adoption. The aim itself has been brought nearer to realisation to a most insignificant degree. There are still hundreds of thousands of families without a separate home, causing sub-normal standards wherever they have found shelter. The supply of new homes has been far below the numbers of marriages. Most of the 165,000 families in England and Wales living in slums in 1939 are still there—and the slums are ten years older. The families living in ill-equipped, old and dreary tenements and houses are enduring conditions even worse than before the war, because their homes are older, more decrepit and dirtier.

Men and materials which should have been concentrated on new housing have been diverted—by a tolerated black market and by

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

extravagant licensing—to non-priority work in private houses, shops, showrooms, offices and hotels. Not more than one-quarter of building trade operatives have ever been working on new houses.

What is of special significance in this failure to carry out measures publicly announced as necessary is the implication that pre-war administrative method and capitalist anarchy of organisation are, after all, suitable instruments for a State housing programme in the judgment of men who esteem themselves Socialist thinkers and planners. They have contributed nothing new to the set-up they inherited from Conservative governments nor altered the set-up in any significant respect. What is exhibited is the naive belief that all that was needed to conquer the classic incapacity of capitalist society to house the workers decently was a mere *wish* to do the job.

A prime example of Socialist Planning (British model) was furnished by Mr. Bevan. At the commencement of his reign at the Ministry of Health he exhorted all the Local Authorities to prepare housing schemes and took some credit for the volume of new housing projects consequently submitted to him and given his sanction. Then he suddenly announced his discovery that Local Authorities had foolishly started so many schemes that, in face of available manpower and material resources, nothing would be finished for a long while. He scolded them for not behaving as if each one of them had the same knowledge of conditions as his own Statistical Department at the centre and said, in effect, 'no pudding for you until you've eaten your meat!'. There was then a cut back in permitted new schemes.

The Labour Party's *Labour Believes in Britain* has virtually nothing to say about the building industry and the building materials industries (apart from cement). Hence, it must be assumed that the Labour Government's experience teaches it that the bold ideas of 1945 were without foundation and altogether superfluous. Capitalism can be relied upon to deliver the houses!

II

Local Authorities, to whom is entrusted the actual task of producing the new homes, are finding themselves in increasing difficulty. The Girdwood Report (June, 1948) revealed what a crisis is developing. The Report recalls that the subsidies, fixed in 1946, assumed an average net rent (i.e. rates extra) of 10s. per week for a house of 950 sq. ft., costing £1,100. It then shows that evidence of actual costs will require this average net rent to be, not 10s. but 14s. 4d. Some Local Authorities, it says, are having to make special rate contributions to keep the rents down, but that others are not doing so and are charging as much as 25s. (without rates) and, finally, that people are refusing houses because the gross rents are beyond their means.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Economic conditions have not changed in favour of the Local Authorities since that Report was written.

The increase of loan charges by ½% since 1946—when the subsidies were fixed—is now involving an additional burden upwards of 1s. 9d. per week. That much more out of family income for the City.

The Labour Government's capitulation to the landowners' demand for present-day price of land acquisitions, instead of 1939 value (as laid down in the 1944 Act) has imposed a two-fold additional burden on the Local Authorities, i.e., a heavier price for the land at its present use-value and a development charge in respect of Improvement Value; the 1946 subsidy did not anticipate this. The cost of land in urbanised areas—where housing need is most intense—is proving so high in numerous cases as to make sheer nonsense of the assumption behind the 1946 Act that the average subsidised rent could be 10s. per week. In one Borough in Inner London, for example, the additional Borough statutory subsidy attributable to expensive land for two of its estates amounts to 2s. 5d. per flat per week. In the same case, interest and loan repayment *for land alone* equals 17s. per flat per week and the *total* State subsidy is but 20s. 7d.

Building material costs have risen over the 1946/9 period; manufacturers' and merchants' profit has expanded since the 1946 Act—unwarrantably and without apparent check from Whitehall. Only labour costs have fallen due to rising productivity on the jobs.

The Labour Research Department's inquiry into Council Rents* shows that many Local Authorities are having to charge rents beyond the means of those in greatest need of re-housing—the low wage-earners. Higher paid workers have the resources to solve their problems (maybe not ideally) and so escape from the direst conditions of hardship.

Hence it is not surprising that one authority has had to pass over 70% of its urgent priority cases and that another says 55% cannot afford new houses. Only 35% of new houses covered by the inquiry (i.e. about one quarter of the national total) are rented—including rates—below 20s. per week for a 3-bedroom dwelling; 42% range between 20s. and 24s. 11d.; 25% between 25s. and 29s. 11d.; and 3% are 30s. or over.

The 1946 assumption of a 10s. average net rent (say, 13s. with rates) has been exploded by realities. Yet Mr. Bevan repeatedly and stoutly declines to seek Parliamentary sanction for increased subsidies to correct the 1946 mistake and make it possible for the Local Authorities to do the job they've been told to do. Mr. Bevan says he looks forward to a fall in costs to put things right. No fall takes place and, indeed, rises may be anticipated.

**Social Service News* (October, 1949).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Local Authorities are, in the main, loath to burden their rates with special contributions, though the sums needed would be small enough per head spread over the ratepayers as a whole. The authorities feel that people not enjoying the new homes would object to further subsidising of those who do. Local Authorities have approached Mr. Bevan through such a sober body as the Association of Municipal Corporations to increase the subsidy: Mr. Bevan turned them down*.

III

To cope with their difficulties, some Local Authorities are transferring better-off tenants in their pre-war dwellings, and post-war requisitioned premises, into the new post-war dwellings at the high rents which most housing list applicants cannot afford. The latter then go into the vacated cheap-rented dwellings. That relief cannot last very long, of course. The real problem will remain to be solved.

That is where Mr. Bevan has stepped in with a ' solution '. He has altered the law.

His 1949 Housing Act makes changes which entirely alter the original character of Labour's programme. Homes for those who need them first, as a principle, now becomes homes for those who can afford them.

The new Act eliminates the obligation to re-house only ' the working classes '. Persons of all incomes—or classes—may now be rehoused and no proportions, as between different classes, are laid down. The Council tenants' safeguard in the 1936 Housing Act (Section 85 (5) has been repealed. Rents may now be fixed according to the arithmetic of the Housing Revenue Account and not according to customary rents for working-class wage-earners.

The Ministry of Health Circular explaining the new Act to all Housing Authorities (No. 90/49) glosses the non-Socialist changes wrought by the Act by saying that

> Local Authorities have been hampered in their objective of producing communities of a balanced type by the limitation of their statutory powers to the provision of houses for the working classes. This limitation has been removed . . . and the local authorities will now be able . . . to meet the varied needs of the community and to ensure a proper balance. . .

But there are no statutory rules as to the composition of the ' balance '. The balance, of course, will be settled in practice by income—with the poorer workers excluded from these ' balanced ' communities.

The mass of the workers have had four years of happy expectation of being able to have homes of proper size and fully equipped with modern conveniences and amenities and at rents they can afford. The dreams conjured for them by *Let Us Face The Future* and the

**Municipal Journal*, 14.11.1949.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

glib exponents of its promises are abruptly ended. Now they awake to reality. Labour candidates brandishing *Labour Believes in Britain* will discover this is not the stuff of which more dreams can be made. 1949 is not 1945.

IV

The fundamentally changed housing programme of the Labour Government involves not only a 'cut' in its volume. It involves a switch away from working-class housing, on the calculation that working-class families will secure homes by moving into the inferior accommodation made empty by the removal of better-off families into the roomier new dwellings. The 'Jumble Sale' principle is restored to British working-class housing.

This ancient principle lies behind the new encouragement and fuller facilities for private house building. It lies behind the apparent tendency of the Ministry of Health to decide in favour of the private developer who appeals against the Compulsory Purchase Orders of a Local Authority. Permit more housing to be created for the well-to-do or better-off and the mass of wage-earners can inherit their cast-off homes. Mr. Bevan's great discovery!

We shall do well to remember these words of Engels:

> The breeding places of disease, the infamous holes and cellars in which the capitalist mode of production confines our workers night after night, are not abolished; they are merely *shifted elsewhere*! The same economic necessity which produced them in the first place, produces them in the next place also. As long as the capitalist mode of production continues to exist, it is folly to hope for an isolated solution of the housing question or of any other social question affecting the fate of the workers.
>
> (*The Housing Question.*)

The historic incapacity of a capitalist society to provide civilised housing conditions for the mass of wage-earning workers has not been evaded by the fact of a huge Labour majority in Parliament, by the fact of there being a Labour Government nor by the fact that State Capitalism reigns over one-fifth of industry.

Something might be achieved, it is true, if Labour leaders determinedly carried out the practical measures to accomplish their adopted aim which *Let Us Face The Future* set out.

The principle of subsidising is challenged by no one today. What the Labour Government is too weak to do is to apply that principle honestly—by augmenting subsidies as economic circumstances dictate. If present annual cost of State subsidies on post-1945 new permanent dwellings at about £8½ millions were increased by 50% the Local Authorities could do the job they were elected to do. The pernicious changes of the 1949 Housing Act could be cancelled. A Government which uncomplainingly adds and adds to the enor-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mous Defence Vote, but refuses a further £4¼ millions to house the demobilised servicemen, contains no Socialists.

The private ownership of the land and the price compulsorily paid on compulsory acquisition of land wreck the financial calculations of sincere housing reformers. Labour Party members genuinely anxious to house the working-class must now recognise that there can be no large-scale progress without a fundamental attack on the land-ownership system.

A simple and traditional working-class approach would discard the employment of capitalist industry to manufacture and distribute all building materials and to construct all Local Authority housing. It would relieve the task of the heavy burden composed of private profit on materials and labour. State enterprises would manufacture the major items among materials and a State house-building Corporation and Municipal Building Departments would do the building.

But the Labour Government has been utilising capitalist principles and capitalist instruments to attain an end impossible to the capitalist system. The paradox it has enacted carries grim consequences for the Labour Party and, of greater importance, for the working-class families of our country.

In carrying out the reactionary policies of the Labour Government, representatives in Labour-held municipalities are permitting their Socialist understanding and their class loyalties to be eaten away by their uncritical operation of a non-Socialist housing policy.

The reformism of the Labour Party's aims and methods in housing has now led to a profound change in the nature of the national housing effort. It is being switched away from working-class housing, on the principle of needs being a first priority, and offers the betrayed working-class the mournful prospect of second-hand and third-hand homes—or the miseries of the Rest Centres and barrack conditions of the Welfare Institutions, now becoming a new form of permanent housing.

The housing question in Britain as it stands today demonstrates the bankruptcy and futility of what is miscalled 'Democratic Socialism' (really surrender to capitalism) in the field where it falsely imagines it has achieved most. The moral for Labour Party members can be read in the anguish and bitterness and disappointment of the hundreds of thousands of families whom the Labour Party was established to lead and serve.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ABDICATION OF TRADE UNION RIGHTS

BRYN GRIFFITHS

THE issue by the General Council of the Trades Union Congress on November 23rd of a Statement to its affiliated organisations on 'Devaluation and Wages' is the most serious decision taken by that body since the end of the war. It is difficult to see what will be left of the real functions of the trade unions if they accept the policy now outlined by the T.U.C. General Council. For, stripped of all the verbiage (e.g., existing machinery of voluntary negotiation must be 'preserved' and that 'it is the responsibility of the Unions themselves to operate the wages policy') and bourgeois economic arguments about the crisis, the gist of the policy is contained in the following propositions: the General Council 'recognise that the standard of living of low-paid workers *may* call for consideration in certain cases', but they 'urge that in consideration of even such cases regard be had to the general economic problems necessitating rigorous restraint'. (Our italics.) Then the General Council proceeds to

> recommend Unions to consider existing wage claims and sliding scale arrangements with a view to holding agreed wage-rates stable while the Interim Index of Retail Prices remains between upper and lower limits of 118 and 106 on the express understanding that if and when the Index figure reaches either the upper or lower limit, both sides of any industry would be entitled to resume the normal consideration of wages in accordance with the provisions of their agreements, and that cost-of-living agreements would again be in operation. Should neither of these limits be reached before January 1st, 1951, the above arrangements shall continue to that date and be reviewed in the light of the then existing facts.

No word here in this new Statement about high profits or on stabilising prices. Not a word about measures to equalise the burden. It is nothing but a programme for reducing the living standards of the mass of the working people. Of what real use is it to talk about maintaining existing negotiation machinery? What will the unions have left to do if they accept a programme which involves stripping them of their basic function of seeking to protect and improve the living standards of their members? What use is it to talk of the problem of the standard of living of low paid workers in such terms as the General Council propose? Anyone with even the most elementary knowledge of negotiation knows that every conciliation and arbitration board, including the National Arbitration Tribunal, will take such a statement of policy as meaning what it is intended to

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mean, namely, that only those whose standard is so low as to make it almost impossible to live if prices rise within the limits set by the T.U.C. can be expected to even get an infinitesimal rise in wages. What can such a policy mean but wage-freezing during a period of rising prices and a consequent drastic reduction in the living standards of the people?

How could the leadership of the oldest trade union movement in the world sink to such a level of ineptitude? Clearly, the present position is the result of a whole process of disintegration. The line of policy now advocated by the Trades Union Congress General Council follows relentlessly from the attitude taken up by them nearly two years ago on the Government's White Paper on ' Personal Incomes, Costs and Prices '. A further retreat was implicit in their attitude then. How far it has retreated from the policy then laid down, can be gauged by a glance at the Statement of policy presented to and accepted by the Special Conference of Executives held in London in March, 1948. Then the General Council ' admitted the necessity of adjusting the wages of workers whose incomes are below a reasonable standard of existence '; affirmed ' that it is in the national interest to establish standards of wages and conditions in the under-manned essential industries in order to attract sufficient manpower '; and called on the movement to endorse that policy of the Government's White Paper

> on condition that the Government pursues vigorously and firmly a policy designed not only to stabilise but to reduce profits and prices.

On that occasion Mr. Tewson, speaking for the General Council, informed the assembled delegates that he would ' make a prophecy on this question of prices with which we are so much concerned ' that we ' can bring about a reduction in the cost of living in a very short period of time '. Hadn't he been in touch with important members of the Government? And, without giving away any secrets, didn't he know the measures the Government meant to take to deal vigorously with profits and prices? That was the effect of Tewson's statement to the delegates

The Statement now before the trade union movement (and to be considered at a special Conference of Executives to be held in London on January 13th, 1950) brings the trade unions right up against the full implications of the dangers of a right-wing policy. Already there are signs of restiveness, and the beginnings of a realisation of where the present policy is leading.

Trade Unions everywhere, and under all conditions, even in a socialist economy, must defend the interests of their members. Even if the majority of the members of the General Council have forgotten this elementary principle of trade unionism, it is understood very well in those countries where free trade unionism is no longer supposed to exist. For example, Zapotocky, Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and Chairman of the Czech T.U.C., understands this principle very well. At a recent meeting of the Trade Union Council he said:

> The main concern of trade unions *under all circumstances* is to safeguard and improve the living standards of the working people (our italics).

Of course, he went on to say that ' in a Socialist economy or in one aiming at Socialism, only an increasing production of work can bring about an improved standard of living '. That is a hundred times correct. In a capitalist country there is no guarantee that increased production will lead to improved living standards. On the contrary, unless the unions fight to maintain and improve the living standards of the workers, they cease to be trade unions and become instruments for imposing increasing burdens on the workers.

This job is already being done. Addressing a conference of shop stewards in the ship building and engineering industries in Newcastle on December 5th, Mr. J. Mathews, National Industrial Officer of the National Union of General and Municipal Workers—which has among its members the lowest paid workers in industry—explained why he was supporting the T.U.C. policy of wage restraint:

> The Union attitude on profits was that large profits were admittedly being made but they would much rather that they should be ploughed back into industry to make security for the Union members, than for the Union members to have a rise now and unemployment later.

What more could the Federation of British Industries and the Shipbuilding and Engineering Employers' Associations expect? It is a glorious day for the employers when the trade union officials assist them in resisting a wage claim.

Therein lies the danger of the policy of the T.U.C. General Council. That is where the policy leads. It is a policy which will sow confusion within the trade union ranks.

But the resistance to this policy will grow. The tradition of struggle within the British trade unions is too strong. These traditions are part of the very fabric of the trade union movement that cannot be sloughed off even though a section of its leadership is straining every nerve to prevent the membership of the unions from carrying the fight against the employers' policy.

The 23rd November, 1949, is a black day in British trade union history but it is also a date that opens out a new phase in the fight for a line of policy within the unions that will lead the British workers into action against a leadership that must be defeated if the workers of Britain are not to be thrown into such depths of privation as will make the hungry 'thirties appear prosperous in comparison.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NIGERIA'S BLOODY FRIDAY

BARBARA RUHEMANN

ON November 20 last year the name of the Nigerian mining town of Enugu became known to the British people. That evening a bare official release told of the shooting two days earlier of a large number of miners at the Enugu colliery by police in ' self defence '.

The true story of that Bloody Friday and the full extent of the massacre is only gradually unfolding. A report* by a Nigerian trade union organiser who was in Enugu at the time tells of 60 men shot dead and 80 admitted to hospital, or nearly thrice the number of casualties admitted in the official release. This report throws some light on why it took the Nigerian Government two days to concoct a story of the Enugu events which it could present to the world. The official story ran that it was ' necessary to evacuate explosives from the mines in the interest of public safety ' and that the miners ' rushed at the police ' who were detailed to carry out this ' precautionary ' measure, in an attempt to ' obtain possession of the explosive stores '. Among significant facts omitted from this version are these:

When the Government (which owns the mine) rejected the miners' demand for a basic wage of 5/10 a day and dismissed over 200 of their number *they refused to come to the surface and continued peacefully working underground; this was the purpose for which they required the explosives;* while at the same time peaceful demonstrations were going on at the pithead in which the local population took part. All this continued for two full days before the massacre *without the outside world being allowed to know one word about it.* Secondly, on November 23 Under-Secretary Mr. Rees Williams was compelled to admit that no police were killed or injured—contrary to the original official statement. A fortnight later on December 7, William Gallacher enquired how many of the miners had entered upon a stay-down strike and then asked the Under-Secretary, who remained mute:

> Is it not the case that these miners went slow; that their number was 251 and they were dismissed; that they refused to come out; and that the officials refused to allow food and water to be taken down to them and even refused them air?

On November 22, in an editorial which omitted any mention of the fact that there had been demands for an increase in wages (and such wages!) *The Times* stated blankly:

> The few trouble-makers in Nigeria have concentrated on gaining power

**Daily Worker*, December 1, 1949.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

inside the trade unions. Active union members . . . are to be found at all the key points. The rank and file African trade union member is more than usually dependent on his leaders and he can be quickly led astray. This is what happened at the Government-owned Enugu colliery.

Was a similar presumption intended to be created by Mr. Creech Jones' reply to questions asked in the House of Commons as late as November 28 to the effect that to the best of his knowledge there had been no negotiations in regard to wages, no trade dispute had been declared and this was not a normal breakdown in labour relations as understood in this country?

Mr. Creech Jones' knowledge may not be of the best, even though in the same breath he advised Mr. Platts-Mills to acquaint himself with the most elementary facts concerning Nigeria before asking questions. We shall be glad to recall some of these elementary facts to Mr. Creech Jones' failing memory.

The first elementary fact is that the Nigerian people are not master in their own home, that their country is administered by the Colonial Office as part of the British colonial system through a Governor appointed by Whitehall. The Governor exercises the absolute right of veto over the so-called 'Legislative Council', a veto against which Mr. Bevin has never been heard to protest.

The colonial system was imposed on the peoples of Nigeria after the capitalist slave trade had seriously depleted the population, corroded and disrupted their old civilisation and weakened the resistance of the people by engendering disastrous internecine wars. Great humanists had long campaigned for the abolition of the slave trade; but their campaign did not succeed until sections of the British capitalist class found that rather than export slaves to their American rivals they would exploit this cheap labour power themselves in its own homeland. That was the basis of colonial rule in Africa. Lest anyone thinks that this basis has miraculously disappeared with the advent of the British Labour Government, let us quote what Lord Baden-Powell said of the African worker in the House of Lords while Mr. Creech Jones was fencing off awkward questions in the House of Commons: 'His wants are few, his cost of living is cheap, and thus labour is inexpensive, besides being plentiful. This latter fact is of inestimable value to all employers of native labour. . .' With a simplicity and directness that are almost touching the Noble Lord thus gave a lesson in elementary facts concerning the essence of colonial economy to his Labour counterparts who accepted it with expressions of the warmest praise.

In fact, Nigeria today under the Labour Government continues not only to be the happy hunting ground of some of the biggest monopolies (such as the United Africa Company—a Unilever subsidiary) in whose interests both wages to the worker and crop prices to the peasant are kept scandalously low; but also is now intended

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to serve as a vital disembarkation point and supply base in the war Anglo-American imperialism is preparing in the interests of monopoly capital, against the Soviet Union and the Peoples' Democracies. Hence the ten-year development plan, whose true purpose is being hidden by Fabian chatter about 'generosity' in 'partnership'.

The recent events are but the culmination of a process which began in the early stages of the war when the denial of civil rights and the economic exploitation were suddenly intensified under the plea of the war emergency. If in 1926 Nigeria was still able to buy back some 80% of its exports in imported goods, by 1941 the volume of imports had shrunk to 25% of exports (in 1926 prices). Of course, a disproportionate amount of the imported goods are bought up by the European staffs of the Government and the companies, while the exported goods are exclusively produced by Nigerians, who raise the cocoa, groundnuts and cotton, climb the palmtrees to cut the fruits and press out the palm oil, wash the tin ore and hew the coal. A list of the imported consumer goods affords an illustration of the beggarly condition of the working people who for manufactured goods must depend almost wholly on imports owing to the destruction of their ancient industries and handicrafts: cotton piece goods predominate to the extent of 26% (1934-9) to 44% (1944). All other items are insignificant in comparison: but the biggest among them is—salt. For the rest there are corrugated iron sheets (roofing for the more 'luxurious' type of building), kerosene, dried fish. . . Such things as bicycles and motor-cars play the rôle not of consumer but of capital goods in Nigeria. But now even dried fish, an important substitute for the meat that is so scarce, has practically dropped out of the diet of the people altogether.

In these last years important changes occurred in the structure of Nigerian society. There was not merely an increase of the population by at least a quarter (now estimated to be over 25 million), but the gearing of Nigeria's economy to the world market as a raw material base has had the effect of driving increasing numbers of peasants off the land and into the towns to swell the ranks of the working class and the unemployed†. In the absence of any social security (no unemployment, sickness or old age benefits) this has

†A memorandum of the Commissioner of the Colony on Unemployment in Lagos admitted that in 1945 'a figure in the region of 30% of the employable persons in Lagos are unemployed' and that 'in general there is evidence of the intensification of those causes which had led to the pre-war level of unemployment and overcrowding'. This problem is not confined to Lagos but applies to all important towns. It has since been further aggravated by the failure of the resettlement scheme for ex-servicemen: by September, 1948, out of a total of over 116,000 demobilised, only some 40,000 had been placed in employment or re-enlisted.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

meant simply an increase in the number of dependents for whom a wage earner or working peasant has to provide.

All these factors combined to produce a drastic rise in the cost of living which began in 1940 and continues to the present day. The Lagos cost of living index, which has been severely criticised for not taking into account the true needs of the workers, rose as follows:

1939	100	
1942	147	(Tudor Davies report)
1945	176	
1947	224	('Nigeria 1947')

Of the housing conditions the official report 'Nigeria, 1947', calmly gives this picture:

> According to a report of the Medical Officer of Health, of the 9,673 dwellings on Lagos Island a total of 5,756, or approximately 60%, are either unfit for human habitation or are constructed of prohibited materials, i.e., bamboo or galvanised iron. In the poorer parts of the town the narrow and tortuous alleys wind through a labyrinth of crazy shacks with dark, cavernous rooms, each of which may house several families; every inch of space is utilised and in some places noisome corridors are partitioned into living rooms by the simple expedient of hanging grass mats at intervals from the roof.

For a room like that, 10 feet by 12, rents of 10s. and more were demanded already by 1945. Nowadays a worker's family is hard put to it to find a room for less than £1. In Enugu rents range from 25 to 35 shillings per month. Only a few of the colliers can afford accommodation in the housing estate built before the war when the labour force employed in the colliery averaged 2,000. Most of the 6,000 miners working there now have to live in ramshackle, barrack-like structures occupying a single room eight feet by ten feet or at most ten feet by ten with their entire family, or walk for miles every day to and from the farms.

Of the workers' diet Major Orde Browne, in his report on Labour Conditions in West Africa (1940), had this to say:

> There is almost universally a shortage of animal protein due to the limited amount of meat and fish available except in a few favoured localities; dairy produce is rare and must be regarded as negligible as far as the manual labourer is concerned. The ordinary diet consists therefore of large quantities of farinaceous food with a proportion of vegetables, including green food and some fruit; small quantities of meat and fish form a relish rather than a constituent. The result is that . . . he shows clear signs of deficiency as soon as he accepts employment involving strenuous exertion. Consequently, there is a marked degree of inefficiency obviously due to lack of stamina; in the case of exacting tasks, such as coal hewing, men will profess themselves unable to work every day, so that employment may only amount to 15 or 16 days a month.

By 1949, it has been estimated, the cost of the diet described by

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Orde Browne, plus rent and the scantiest clothing (shoes or protection against the tropical rains do not figure in a worker's budget), for an average family is at least £7 per month in provincial towns (Kaduna, for instance), while in Lagos ' if a person earning £7 desires to maintain a normal balanced diet he must, in addition to his salary, owe or borrow £3. If he has a son to educate in any secondary school he must in addition seek a loan of £30, bringing his total indebtedness to £66 a year ' (Article by Mbadiwe, *West African Pilot,* 27.5.49). The fact that wages have failed to keep pace with the rising cost of living is driving the workers more and more into the hands of the moneylenders, of whom there are some 300 registered in Lagos alone. That is the bitter experience of thousands of workers, who need no ' political agitators ' to tell them so.

Mr. Creech Jones' statement on wages received by the Enugu miners fails to mention the numbers employed in each grade, making it impossible to check on his estimate of average earnings being as high as 7s. a day. But in 1948 (before the recent steep rise in prices of foodstuffs and rents) average earnings of underground workers, according to the Nigerian Department of Labour *Quarterly Review,* were 3s. 4d. a day, of surface workers 2s. 5d. per day.

Anyone acquainted with the elementary facts about the real situation in Nigeria must scorn the suggestion that their strike movement is anything but the response of ordinary human beings to intolerable conditions. He will be more surprised at their great patience, restraint and discipline in the face of provocation. The application for an increase in the basic wage to a mere 5s. 10d. a day is treated in the most high-handed manner. Only then do the miners decide to go slow—and dismissals and bullets are the reply.

The young Nigerian trade union movement is learning its lessons in bitter battles. The Government, which is incidentally the biggest single employer in the country, hiring 135,000 out of the estimated 250,000 workers, and the private companies have on repeated occasions employed similar tactics: studied contempt for the workers' demands; refusal to negotiate with the elected representatives of the workers; endless procrastination on the pretext of having to contact a higher authority or head office in London; dismissals and victimisation of trade union officials; and finally police baton charges and bullets for unarmed workers and their wives and children. In 1947 11 unarmed strikers were severely wounded by batons and rifle fire on the United Africa Company's private island of Burutu; early in 1949 a striker was shot dead in Kaduna; later in the year 800 War Department workers were batoned out of their workplace and locked out. But not since 1929, when police fired on the great demonstration of the women of Aba protesting against taxation, and killed 38, has police violence assumed such wantonly murderous nature as at Enugu.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Nigerian workers fought at the battlefronts and suffered privations at home in the war, at the end of which freedom was promised them. Instead they reaped the 'Richards Constitution' which threatens the country with dismemberment and strengthens colonial rule from Whitehall; invocation of 'sedition laws' for every word uttered in defence of freedom, and all kinds of manœuvres to sow dissension in the trade union movement and the national movement for liberation. Yet, despite all this, their movement has grown in strength and experience, their will to be free becomes so unquenchable, that at the slightest assertion of elementary, legitimate demands the authorities fly into a panic and run amuck.

The reaction to the events of that Bloody Friday at Enugu has been the coming together of all political parties and trade unions to form an Emergency Committee and set up an independent inquiry commission. Protest demonstrations and mass meetings continued in many parts of Nigeria for ten days. At the same time 20,000 Cameroons plantation workers came out on strike for a 1s. wage increase. Police in hundreds are rushed from one end of the country to the other; press censorship is imposed, state of emergency declared, more shots are fired, more innocent people killed.

The Nigerian Government and the Colonial Office hope to retrieve the situation by the appointment of a 'commission of inquiry' consisting of a tried colonial administrator, two West African High Court judges—known supporters of the colonial régime—and the legal adviser of the British National Union of Mineworkers. Neither the Nigerian nor the British working class are represented on this commission. But this kind of measure is too well known both here and in Nigeria to succeed.

The Nigerian people are not only backing the miners' wage claim, they are demanding adequate compensation for the dependents of the victims and trial and just punishment of those who authorised the shooting. They want to make sure against any recurrence of such wanton police terror.

These demands are supported by British trade unionists and all progressive people. The news of the Enugu massacre has roused an indignation which finds expression in protests in and outside parliament, messages of sympathy and support for the Nigerian trade unionists' struggle and donations for the dependents of the killed miners. British workers have made it known to the Nigerian people that they are not alone in their struggle for decent standards of living, for political liberties, for the liberation of their country from colonial oppression. New bonds of solidarity have been forged which neither the Anglo-American imperialists nor their stooges of various hues, from pink to yellow, can break. The Nigerian people know now more clearly than ever that their friends are those who march in the camp of peace, democracy and progress.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A BATTLE FOR LIVES AT U.N.O.

PAT SLOAN

LATE on the evening of December 5, 1949, a message was flashed by *Reuters* from New York that the United Nations Assembly had instructed its President, General Romulo, to ask Athens to stop all executions for so long as the Conciliation Committee on the Balkans remained in existence. Nobody voted against this proposal.

This short message was a sequel to the biggest battle to save human lives that has so far raged at the United Nations. Very little is known in Britain of this battle, because the Press has been silent about it. But it has nevertheless been a great battle, steadfastly waged since September 27, by delegates of the U.S.S.R., Poland, Ukraine, Byelorussia and Czechoslovakia to save the lives of those heroic Greek men and women, most of whom won glory in the patriotic Resistance against the Nazis, who are today still held for execution in Greek jails.

Never before at U.N.O. has the rotten, corrupt, inhuman character of a member state been so exposed as has Greek monarcho-fascism at this Assembly. Citing chapter and verse, Vyshinsky has torn to shreds the already tattered curtain aimed at concealing the brutal terror in British-occupied American-governed Greece. Indeed, so telling were Vyshinsky's facts and arguments, so convincing the further evidence cited by the Polish, Ukrainian and Byelorussian delegates, that the Anglo-American voting machine began to creak so audibly that one of Vyshinsky's amendments on the executions was only lost by a single vote. This high-light is worth recording, for it shows that when defending crimes against Humanity the Anglo-Americans can no longer complacently rely on an automatic dollar majority.

The leaders of the Anglo-American camp came to this autumn's Assembly with plans for a further onslaught against Albania, Bulgaria and the other People's Democracies. On the basis of the latest U.N.S.C.O.B.* report (which was duly demolished by Vyshinsky) they not only intended to fasten on these countries the whole responsibility for the Greek tragedy, but there was widespread talk of getting U.N. sanction for the sending of an 'international force' to guard the Greek frontier, while the Athens press screamed openly for an invasion of Albania and a blockade of Albanian ports. At the same time, it was hoped to make much of the alleged 'abduction' of Greek children by the People's Democracies.

The Soviet Union had also clarified its position on the Greek question prior to the Assembly. In May, 1949, Gromyko had

*United Nations Special Commission on the Balkans.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

unofficially stated the Soviet solution: the cessation of the civil war, a general amnesty, and free elections organised by a body on which the Greek liberation movement would be duly represented. Gromyko had also proposed the supervision of the elections and control of Greece's northern frontiers by the Great Powers, including the U.S.S.R.

The Provisional Democratic Government of Free Greece made it clear before the Assembly met that it would wholeheartedly accept a solution on the basis of the Soviet proposals. Furthermore, it declared that as the main forces of the Democratic Army had not been in action since August, Athens no longer had any pretext for continuing the reign of terror and opposing a restoration of democratic rights.

Such were the positions of the two camps when the Assembly met.

* * *

The Anglo-Americans assumed that they would have the initiative on Greece at the Assembly. To their great discomfiture, the initiative was seized by Poland and the U.S.S.R. On September 28 the Australian delegate proposed at the Political Committee that a conciliation committee be set up to deal with relations between Greece and her northern neighbours before the U.N.S.C.O.B. report was discussed. This was agreed unanimously. But Katz-Suchy, the Polish delegate, at once seized the opportunity to call on Athens to stop the courts martial and executions. Kisselev of Byelorussia supported, and Hector McNeil opposed on the grounds that such a resolution would be an interference in Greece's internal affairs. The next day the resolution was defeated by 41 votes to 6, but only after the Athens spokesman, Pipinellis, had been compelled to state that executions were for the time being suspended.

On September 30 the democratic world was shocked to hear that the Secretary of the Greek Electrical Workers' Union, D. Georgiou, had been executed despite Pipinellis' undertaking at U.N.O. To the embarrassment of the Anglo-Americans, and under pressure from the Polish and Soviet delegates, the Chairman of the Political Committee undertook to enquire into the circumstances of the execution.

On October 5 an attempt by Katz-Suchy to secure the condemnation of Athens for its execution of Georgiou was defeated by only 34 votes to 6, a considerable increase in abstentions compared with a week before.

On October 18 the Conciliation Committee reported failure. The reasons were, first, that Athens would not accept the present Albanian frontier as final, and secondly, because Athens would not accept Vyshinsky's proposals for an amnesty and properly controlled elections. The Polish delegate again raised the question of the executions, asking the Canadian Chairman what steps he would take

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to preserve the lives of Greek Democrats sentenced to death. This time the Chairman undertook to consult the Assembly's President, General Romulo.

* * *

In the meantime a heart-rending appeal had been sent to Joseph Stalin by the relatives of eight Democrats sentenced to death on October 13, repeating the descriptions they had given in court of their tortures at the hands of the Greek police. So when the Political Committee began on October 24 to discuss the report of the abortive Conciliation Committee, Vyshinsky at once moved an emergency resolution demanding that Athens halt the executions and repeal the death sentences. He was supported by Manuilsky, who denounced the Athens rulers as the 'heirs of Hitler'. A mass of horrible facts concerning the executions and concentration camps of Greece was given publicity. And despite Anglo-American attempts to stop the discussion, many delegates expressed themselves as really horrified at the Greek terror.

The Thailand representative warned that he would find it 'extremely difficult to vote against the Soviet resolution'. Mexico said it was 'greatly impressed by the facts of the wholesale executions'. The Norwegian delegate said that 'the Greek Government would be well advised to take notice of the deep concern expressed by several members of the Committee and we sincerely hope that it will show the greatest moderation and clemency towards its political opponents'. And even the French delegate said that the Athens repressions were conducted 'so blindly, brutally and unjustly that frequently innocent people became the victims of these repressions'. It was most noticeable that the Yugoslav delegate only criticised the persecution of Slav Macedonians in Northern Greece, while being meticulously careful not to condemn the oppression of Greek Democrats in general.

The Soviet resolution was defeated. Nevertheless, such a stir had been created that a compromise resolution by Ecuador was carried by 40 votes to four, asking the Chairman 'to find out the point of view of the Greek Government' regarding the suspension of death sentences 'for the duration of the conciliation committee'. Vyshinsky fought tooth and nail to have this resolution strengthened, and his amendment calling for the deletion of the limiting phrase, 'for the duration of the conciliation committee', was only lost by 16 votes to 17. Throughout, Hector McNeil opposed every proposal to curtail the Athens terror.

Between the execution of Georgiou on September 30 and the end of October, Athens has admitted only four more executions, as compared to an average of four a day in the preceding period. This is clear proof that the fight of Vyshinsky and Katz-Suchy has already saved human lives.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

On the question of the Greek children, mercifully evacuated to the People's Democracies to escape starvation and bombing, there was an Anglo-American-Australian-Kuomintang resolution condemning the People's Democracies for not returning the children. Again, however, under pressure from the U.S.S.R., Poland and Czechoslovakia, all offending passages were withdrawn and finally a unanimous resolution was adopted for the return of the children when conditions permit.

Though Athens has presented a list of 5,000 'requests' from parents to have their children returned, the People's Democracies have demanded proof that such requests are genuine and freely signed, and no such proof has yet been forthcoming.

* * *

The final text of the main Anglo-American-Australian-Kuomintang resolution on Greece was adopted by 38 votes to six on November 4. This resolution will give little solace, however, to Athens. In only two respects does it seriously differ from the resolution of a year ago: First, Yugoslavia is now graciously excluded from the list of countries allegedly aiding the Greek guerillas. And secondly, an arms embargo against Albania and Bulgaria is called for. But since the dollar-dependencies are prohibited from sending arms or even strategic raw materials to Albania and Bulgaria anyway, and the People's Democracies and the Soviet Union will continue their fraternal policy towards these two states, this new clause in fact will have no effect whatsoever.

A further British resolution, condemning the alleged firing by Albanian frontier troops on U.N.S.C.O.B. officials, was rushed through by 40 votes to six on October 31. But, as Malik (U.S.S.R.) later pointed out, this was done by means of a trick. The Chairman did not read the Albanian note, denying the alleged incident, until the vote had been taken!

Vyshinsky's main resolution, which embodied the points of Gromyko's peace proposals, was voted on point by point. It never mustered more than 6 favourable votes, but the numbers who voted against are significant. For example, only 31 voted against the proposed amnesty this time, as against 41 who opposed Katz-Suchy's resolution against the death sentences a month earlier. Under present conditions of dollar-dictatorship in the capitalist world the number of abstentions at U.N.O. is as significant as abstentions in the House of Commons in face of a three-line whip.

* * *

When the Assembly as a whole discussed the Greek question, the main Anglo-American-Australian-Kuomintang resolution was endorsed, but on the question of the executions the Assembly was far more cautious. This question was referred to Vyshinsky and McNeil for private discussion, and it was following this discussion that

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Reuter reported on December 5 that General Romulo was to ask Athens to postpone all executions for the time being.

Until this resolution was put to the Assembly, to be accepted unanimously, McNeil had consistently opposed every attempt to secure an expression of United Nations disapproval of the Greek executions. This attitude was fully approved by Mr. Mayhew in the House of Commons on November 2. It is also significant that during the Political Committee debate, and as a direct result of a statement by Vyshinsky, McNeil was obliged to reveal the text of a letter from Bevin to Dr. Evatt at the time of last autumn's Assembly. Dr. Evatt had proposed action to end the civil war in Greece, to which Bevin replied: ' If we were to take the steps suggested by you we should, we feel, be interfering in the internal affairs of Greece '. This hypocrisy, from a Foreign Minister with thousands of troops, a Military Mission and a Police Mission in the country concerned, was only brought out into the open thanks to Vyshinsky's goading.

This year the U.S.S.R. and the Democratic forces have achieved one great victory: they have cast a lurid spotlight on the Athens terror, and sympathy for the demand for an amnesty has penetrated other delegations to a far greater extent than ever before. Whatever the mechanics of the dollar-subsidised vote, Athens has been exposed and the orgy of executions has at least been halted.

Greece will be discussed in the full Assembly. Before then pressure can be brought to bear on the various national delegations to support, at least, an amnesty in Greece.

Stalin's lightning response to the appeal from the relatives of the victims of Greek fascism and Vyshinsky's exposure of Anglo-American hypocrisy and Athens brutality fittingly coincided with the celebration of the 32nd Anniversary of the Soviet State, a régime born of a people's struggle for a democratic peace. But far more could still be done in the countries of ' western democracy ' to support this battle for human lives, and it is to be hoped that even at this late hour the British Government may be forced by public opinion to repudiate the fascist police state of Athens and its régime of executions and terror.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Document of the Month

APPEAL TO THE WORKERS OF THE U.S.A., BRITAIN, FRANCE AND HOLLAND BY THE W.F.T.U. CONFERENCE AND AUSTRALASIAN COUNTRIES

The closing session at Peking of the Trade Union Conference of Asian and Australasian Countries passed on December 1st the following appeal to the working men and women of the United States of America, Great Britain, France and Holland:

COMRADES! We, the delegates to the Trade Union Conference convened by the World Federation of Trade Unions in November, 1949, in Peking, are appealing to you in the name of millions of working men and women of Asia and Australasia. We have heard with pained emotion the reports presented by the delegates from Vietnam, Indonesia and Malaya on the struggle led by the people in these countries against the military forces of the colonialists. We send you a fraternal appeal for solidarity and ask you to support the oppressed people fighting for their freedom and independence.

Comrades! Your governments pretend that they are respecting the rights of the peoples to self-determination. They are lying. In actual fact they are carrying out in Asia a brutal colonial policy. They have sent armed forces to repress the national liberation movements in Vietnam, Indonesia and in Malaya. American occupation troops are still in Southern Korea. On the pretext of sending military advisers, the American imperialists maintain their occupation troops in the country and intervene in every way in the internal affairs of the Korean people.

The armed intervention of imperialist forces is accompanied by cruel acts against the workers and their trade unions. During last year in Indonesia alone, more than 25,000 patriots, fighters and trade union members affiliated to the national trade union centre—SOBSI—have been killed or imprisoned. Numerous leaders of this organisation, among them Harjono, Darusman and Eei Gee Hwai, were murdered in December, 1948.

In Malaya, the British authorities have banned the Pan-Malayan Federation of Labour and executed its leaders Veresenam and Ganapathy.

In Southern Korea numerous trade union leaders have been imprisoned, tortured or executed. With the help of the puppet government of Syngman Rhee, the American occupation authorities are punishing with monstrous cruelty those who dare express their indignation with the conditions of slavery and terror existing in Southern Korea. Lately in the Isle of Chedju alone, 259 villages out of 400 were burnt down. In the Province of South Depla more than 600 persons were shot in the course of a month.

Comrades! A people which oppresses another is not a free people. We know that you do not support the colonial and aggressive policy of the imperialists. It is contrary to your interests. It leads to the shedding of your blood. It entails a constant increase in expenditure leading to either heavier taxation or to inflation; both these measures finally weigh down on the shoulders of the working class. It results in a constant deterioration of your standards of living: the credits needed for education, reconstruction, housing and

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CARTOONS FROM ABROAD

[*The cartoons in this issue of the magazine are reproduced from the Soviet weekly journal 'Krokodil'*—ED. L.M.]

Says the Pound to the Dollar 'Beg pardon, hope I'm not crowding you?'

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Morals on the Colonial Market (from 'Krokodil')

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

public health are sacrificed to the expenses entailed by the colonial wars. They benefit only those who continue to reap their scandalous profits through the inhuman exploitation of men, women and even children in the colonial countries or through the supply of war equipment. They also benefit the American imperialists who thus pursue their expansionist policy and try to transform the countries of Southeast Asia, against the national interests of these countries, into bases of aggression against the Soviet Union.

We duly appreciate the fraternal solidarity shown by the French workers and especially by the Dunkirk, Algiers, Marseilles and La Rochelle dockers who refused to load ships bound for Vietnam.

We appreciate the growing resistance of the Dutch soldiers preferring imprisonment to any participation in the bloody terror against the Indonesian people who justly aspire to freedom and national independence.

But the war goes on and is threatening to spread. In order to put an end to these reactionary colonial wars you must all join the tide of protest and make your actions stronger and better organised day by day till the day when the peoples of Asia will be free.

Comrades! Don't let yourselves be deceived by your governments which try to mask their (aggressive) and oppressive policy by setting up puppet governments to confuse public opinion. Hatta has against him the Indonesian people just as Bao Dai has against him the Vietnamese people, and these peoples reject the agreements concluded with them and continue their struggle.

Comrades! The Second Congress of the World Federation of Trade Unions held last July condemned these colonial wars and denounced the mobilisation of certain peoples against one another. We now expect from you an immediate and unanimous intervention against these unjust wars unleashed by the imperialists in the countries of Asia. We are sending you a warm and pressing appeal asking you to organise demonstrations of protest against the predatory colonial wars in the Asian countries which are danger points whence the fire may spread and which threaten world peace.

We urge you resolutely to demand from the governments of your countries the immediate withdrawal of their troops from Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaya and Southern Korea. Only a powerful and organised drive of the working class can hold in check and compel the governments of your countries to cease their armed intervention in the countries of Asia and to recognise the democratic rights and freedoms of the peoples of these countries.

We express the hope that you will respond to our appeal, to the appeal of millions of working people of Asia who are yearning for peace, freedom and justice.

Long live the freedom and genuine independence of the people of Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaya and Southern Korea!

Long live international working class solidarity in the struggle for the freedom and independence of the peoples!

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Book Reviews

A LEARNED 'BANDIT'

India from Primitive Communism to Slavery. By S. A. Dange. (People's Publishing House, Bombay, *Rs.* 2.)

PREMIER NEHRU, fresh from his rapturous reception by the New York Stock Exchange, has been engaged in denouncing the Indian Communists as 'bandits', 'assassins', 'thugs', 'dacoits' and all the other familiar terms of abuse reserved by the venerable tradition of the British Home Department in India for Indian patriots. From the heights of his profound Harrovian wisdom he has found the Indian Communists 'stupid'. From the triumphant climax of his retention of India in the British Empire, and attaching of India to the Anglo-American war chariot (with consequent expenditure of half the Indian Budget on military purposes) he finds the Indian Communists, with their demand for independence, 'anti-national'.

Meanwhile one of the best known leaders of the 'bandits', S. A. Dange, President of the All-India Trade Union Congress, who has led the Indian masses in struggle for over a quarter of a century, and is well known to trade unionists in this country, especially among the miners and textile workers, has published a book from jail. With typical debased instincts, pandering to the lowest lusts and passions, he has devoted his book to a study of prehistoric and ancient sociological development in India from the epoch of primitive Communism to the epoch of slavery. 'Anti-national' to the core, and 'wholly alien to Indian culture and traditions', he has had the miserable cunning and effrontery to display in this book a close knowledge and study of the original Sanscrit sources, of the Vedas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upanishads, and of the traditional Brahminical ritual, which would put many professional scholars to shame.

It is indeed in the best tradition of Marxist scholarship that such a work should have been produced from jail. The book was mainly prepared and drafted in Yeravda Jail in 1942-43. When the proofs required to be corrected in 1948, the author was once again a prisoner—this time under detention without charge or trial by the imperialist satellite government. As the publishers explain, this prevented necessary 'consultations with him regarding final revisions of proofs, etc.'. These circumstances, and the consequent limitations of access to materials, must be taken into account in appreciating the achievement the book represents and making allowance for any shortcomings.

It is likewise characteristic of the active militant record of the author that this book by no means represents an academic refuge under prison conditions into the sphere of 'pure' research in a field thousands of years removed from present problems. On the contrary, the importance of the subject, as always in the best historical work, arose from present problems and discussions, and the purpose of the author was consciously practical. He explains in the Preface:

> For a short while I had been permitted to mix with Congress prisoners. We had talks, and I found out that unless I went to the root of the matter and gave them an outline of the rise of the classes and the State in Indian society from the point of view of historical materialism, they would not be satisfied. They were fresh young men who were eager to learn and understand.

He shows how successive stages in the treatment of Indian history have corresponded to the polemical purposes, first of imperialism, and then of the Indian national bourgeoisie.

History was used by the Eng-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lish rulers of India to demoralise the rising freedom movement, to build a psychosis in the leadership of the people that compared to world history, its age, its achievement, India and its people were nowhere; and whatever of its history was known led to one conclusion that this country and its people were destined to be always conquered and ruled by foreign invaders. Geography, climate and culture inevitably doomed us to this fate. Serious and responsible historians of the *Cambridge History* and other works propagated this thesis.

Against this the Indian nationalist school of historians sought to glorify and idealise the past of India:

> In order to fight it, our historians went to prove that India's history really almost begins world history of present man . . .
>
> Such militant history writing had its use, no doubt, in the struggle against the British power. But just as it gave the Indian Nationalist a certain morale, it also gave him a false sense of values regarding the past and made him venerate everything that was of the past, but had ceased to be of use in the present, or had become a positive hindrance.

So arose the myth of Indian exceptionalism, propagated by Gandhism and similar schools, which sought to find in Indian institutions and traditions a unique self-sufficing eternal culture and philosophy, and to insist that the scientific laws of historical development laid bare by historical materialism or Marxism, however applicable to other countries, could never apply to India. The parallel with the old Narodnik illusions which Lenin had to combat in pre-revolutionary Russia is evident.

The essential purpose of Dange's study of primitive Indian conditions is to destroy this mythology, and to demonstrate that the laws of historical materialism apply equally to the development of Indian society.

> As yet there has neither been a serious presentation of Indian history from the point of view of historical materialism, nor a serious refutation of such a view . . .
>
> It is my firm opinion that the vast storehouse of Hindu mythology and religious/social laws and practices, if read and sifted on the basis of historical materialism, would yield a consistent and rational picture of India's ancient history, though it will not be to the liking of the Hindu orthodoxy or bourgeois philosophy. It will then appear that the law of historical materialism, the law that productive forces and productive relations determine man's history through the ages, is valid for India, too, for the past, the present and the future.

Once this essential polemical purpose of Dange's courageous and thought-provoking study is understood, its high value as a pioneering work of contemporary Indian Marxist scholarship can be justly appreciated.

Dange's book is a pioneering work in an enormous field of study in which a vast amount of further research and examination of evidence will be necessary to reach firm conclusions. Dange's approach is bold, imaginative and stimulating. He opens up far-reaching prospects in the exploration of primitive conditions on the basis of Indian origins, which will merit the most careful attention of students in this field in all countries. If sometimes the generalisations may appear too confident and over-simplified, in relation to the weight of the evidence adduced, or inadequate to the full scope of the problems, there is no doubt that the general approach reflects a consistent and well-instructed Marxist outlook, and that the treatment contrasts with what has been previously current in this field from Indian bourgeois sources as the light of day to darkness or twilight.

The limitations arise from the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pioneering character of Dange's book, no less than from the difficult conditions of its production. He has confined himself almost exclusively to the interpretation of literary and traditional sources, without taking into account the results of archæological work. Mahenjodaro receives no more than a passing incidental reference in the introduction, and Harappa none. Yet the indications that the city-states of the Indus valley, which flourished in the third millennium B.C., were destroyed by conquest in the first half of the second millennium, would raise serious problems in relation to his time-schedule, no less than with regard to the problems of cultural impact which are ignored in his virtually exclusive preoccupation with Ayran culture. It must be recognised that the author has not had the opportunity to acquaint himself with the results of the more recent work of Soviet Indologists. In the interpretation of the texts and rituals, where Dange undoubtedly opens up many brilliant lines of theoretical suggestion, no less than in the etymological arguments, the final assessment must be left to experts in the field (a careful review by a group of Marxist Indologists in this country will be published in a forthcoming issue of the *Modern Quarterly*). But the impression created for the lay reader is that he attempts to build too much on too little; that he selects in an eclectic fashion a few examples of texts and myths from the vast available arsenal in order to construct therefrom a gigantic speculative edifice; and that he relies too much on lengthy citations from Engels to establish the ordered sequence of his argument, fitting in fragments of evidence into the framework provided by Engels, rather than conducting an independent examination of the body of Indian evidence as a whole in order to deduce therefrom conclusions which not only illustrate the general laws of development already established by the science of historical materialism, but also take into account the special forms of social development in India (e.g. the extent to which the survivals of the village-commune organisation modified the forms of development of class forces in India).

To demand so much, however, would be to demand the unreasonable at the present stage and under the conditions under which the author has had to work. Dange has opened up a rich and fruitful field for creative Indian Marxist research. Students of Marx will be aware of the close attention which Marx gave to Indian social development, not only in the modern period, but from primitive conditions, as of the greatest importance for the study of human development, with special regard to the significance of the Indian village commune and its relation to the growth and forms of class antagonisms. In the collection of hitherto unpublished writings of Marx now available in the Soviet Union a whole volume is devoted to Marx's Notebooks on Indian history; and it is to be hoped that this volume may presently be made available in English (a copy of the Russian edition may be consulted in the Marx Memorial Library). The work in which Dange has proved himself a worthy pioneer will go forward; and the collective efforts of Marxist students and theorists in India and other countries will help to clarify many problems which still remain obscure, and, by utilising the weapon of Marxist theory to unlock the problems of Indian social development and interpret its exceptionally rich treasury of age-old myth and tradition, throw a flood of light, not only on Indian conditions, but on the development of mankind.

R.P.D.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE GREAT TITO CONSPIRACY

Tito's Plot Against Europe. By Derek Kartun. (Lawrence and Wishart, 2*s.* 6*d.*)

THE ranks of the 'friends of Tito' movement are growing fast. Churchill and Eden are leading members. The Greek monarcho-fascist chiefs like Venizelos express their gratitude. Mr. Truman and Mr. Acheson are active in the movement which has been swelled by the leading publicists of the West German monopolies and the organ of the French Comité des Forges. In Britain all the capitalist press, *Times* and *Telegraph, Sunday Observer, Economist,* and even the *Daily Herald,* sing loud his praises to the skies.

Why have all these spokesmen and instruments of dying imperialism rallied to the support of the Tito gang? Not only because he is *their* man, *their* tool, *their* servant. But because when the old right wing parties of reaction, right wing groups of the peasant parties, and the right wing Social-democrats have been defeated and exposed before the people, Anglo-American reaction needs a fresh weapon to try and penetrate the left wing organisations of the Popular Democracies, above all the Communist Parties, and to disrupt and destroy the new popular régimes *from within.* And because in the *capitalist countries,* as the slump develops, and as the workers learn from their own experience the treachery of the right wing labour leaders, capitalism needs new tools, to try to penetrate from the left, under the cloak of revolutionary phrases, into the working class movement, and to spy on it, disrupt, confuse it and divide it from inside. *This is the role they assign to the Titoites.*

That is why Derek Kartun's new book, the *Tito Plot Against Europe,* is so very timely and so very important. What he has done is to reconstruct the story of the plot revealed at the Rajk trial, at which he was present, putting the events into chronological order, bringing into vivid relief the main figures of the conspiracy, the main events in the developing plot against peace and against the people of Europe. The book is a fine piece of vivid writing, and no reader who has taken it up will easily put it down again.

Here you see drawn together with great skill all the main threads of Tito's plot against Europe. The Hungarian conspirators led by the police informer Laszlo Rajk, that head of police agents and former fascists who sent hundreds to their death by torture in the days of the illegal struggle, and who in Hungary's new democracy plotted the assassination of the best leaders of the Hungarian people. But behind Rajk and his gang you see Tito and his men, who, having betrayed their own people, become a major instrument of Anglo-American imperialism in its plot against the European peoples. Kartun's book enables the reader to understand *how* the Yugoslav Communist Party leadership fell into the hands of a gang of Trotskyites, agents of foreign reaction, how the betrayal developed in the course of the Second World War, and how the Tito group, organised for treachery by agents of British imperialism during the war, were taken over, once the war ended, lock, stock and barrel by U.S. Intelligence.

But finely painted in the vivid incidents of Kartun's book are the *main* criminals who stand behind Rajk and behind Tito—the forces of Anglo-American reaction themselves. You see at work the dark fraternity of international spies and provocateurs. You see how Hungarian fascist police, Deuxième Bureau of France, German Gestapo, U.S. and British Intelligence, *even when at war with each other,* join hands in using spies and provocateurs against the U.S.S.R., the People's Democracies and against the organisations of the working class. They carry out the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dirty work of their class with dirty weapons and betray the interests of their people. U.S. and British Intelligence today are staffed to no small extent with the recruits of the Gestapo.

Derek Kartun's book should be widely read and widely popularised within the Labour movement, alongside the official verbatim report of the Rajk trial now available in English. It answers many of the questions of sincere Labour workers who are confused about the position in Yugoslavia. It throws back the slanders of the capitalist press into the faces of the capitalists themselves.

Kartun quotes the words of the Public Prosecutor at the trial:—

> *In connection with this case they ask in Western Countries: How did so many traitors get into the ranks of the revolutionary Labour Movement? It is ironic that the very people ask this who would be able to answer this question; that these spokesmen of the intelligence services who call us to account for these traitors are the very ones who sent them into our ranks. . . . It may be asked why the workers' parties were not able to expose these traitors immediately. If only we had had in our hands the files which contained the lists! As is known the dossiers of the Hungarian police are not at our disposal but at the disposal of the American Intelligence service.*

What more complete answer could there be?

JAMES KLUGMANN.

RUNNING AWAY FROM REVOLUTION

Growing Up Into Revolution, by Margaret Cole (Longmans, 15*s*, 224 pp.)

WHEN I was a young man in the movement I had a fairish amount to do with G.D.H. and Margaret Cole; thirty years ago, indeed, I numbered them among my mentors, particularly because of their Guild Socialist guerilla warfare against the Old Fabians—i.e., Sidney and Beatrice Webb—as the ideologists of bourgeois and bureaucratic Social-democracy.

Mrs. Cole's volume of reminiscences thus has a peculiar ironic appeal to me. For, if one can stomach its middle-aged skittishness, it is an interesting documentation of the decline and fall of an English middle-class Socialist intellectual. It shows plainly how, lacking the solid and sure basis of Marxism, the militant anti-Fabians of yesteryear have become the neo-Fabians of today.

Where, now, are those scintillating old attacks on the Webbs? Sidney and Beatrice moved forward from Fabianism to a real understanding of Soviet Communism. Mrs. Cole and her circle moved backward to the position of vulgar anti-Soviet, anti-Communist snipers and sneerers, of (in fact) enemies of the Socialist Revolution into which the lady purports to be growing up. Or does she? Mrs. Cole's Revolution turns out not to be a Revolution at all but the spread of modern technique and the Welfare State.

Plus ça change . . . for the well-known pinpointing of the Old Fabians by Engels in 1893 applies equally to the neo-Fabians of 1949: 'with great industry they have produced amid all sorts of rubbish some good propagandist writings. . . But as soon as they get on to their specific tactics of hushing up the class struggle it all turns putrid. Hence, too, their fanatical hatred of Marx and all of us—because of the class struggle'.

The social historian will find some passing interest in Mrs. Cole's account of her childhood and youth as the daughter of an eminent Cambridge don, especially for the picture of the petty narrowness of such a milieu at the turn of the century. There is something really grim about the late Professor Postgate scraping the jam off his children's bread if they exceeded their exiguous allow-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ance—and dying worth £30,000. No doubt it explains the girlish enthusiasm with which Mrs. Cole describes her introduction, late in life, to stylish dance joints plus oyster-and-champagne suppers.

Perhaps it is no accident that Mrs. Cole has grown careless in the little matter of checking simple references; she disarmingly proclaims that she has had to rely on her memory, since she kept no personal documents, but that is scarcely an excuse for the wrong titling of Royal Commissions, for calling Red Friday (1925) Red Thursday, or for rendering the famous 1926 miners' slogan 'Not a penny off the pay, not a second on the day' as 'Not a penny, not a minute'.

G.A.H.

NOVEL OF ENGLISH CIVIL WAR

Englishmen with Swords. By Montagu Slater. (Bodley Head, 1949, 10*s.* 6*d.*)

IN the years 1647/9, amidst sharp class struggles, the crisis of the English bourgeois revolution matured. Feudal monarchy, weakened by defeat in the Civil War, was still a power; and among the victorious bourgeoisie a bitter struggle developed between right-wing compromisers (Presbyterians) and revolutionary left-wing (Independents). The Independents, outnumbered in Parliament but controlling the Army, were forced to ally themselves with the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie, which rapidly developed its own ideology, organisation and programme. This alliance, maintaining a precarious unity, defeated the counter-revolution in 1648; but the execution of Charles I, which sealed the victory, enabled the bourgeois leaders to break the petty-bourgeois democratic movement.

These are the events, rich in drama and in lessons, which Mr. Slater portrays, in the form of imaginary memoirs of a real historical person: Gilbert Mabbott, who was confidential clerk at Headquarters of the New Model Army. Using fully and accurately the rich contemporary material, he has reproduced with uncanny skill the language and mind of the 17th century. There are unforgettable pen-pictures of men and events—of London: 'a lively city, a city for ever reading and discussing'; of Cromwell: 'his voice hoarse but not with weather, hoarse, if that be feasible, with thinking'; of the New Model: 'an army of meetings'. Leveller leaders, generals, parliament men come to life in secret reports, glimpsed gestures, overheard conversations.

This is the story of a revolutionary crisis, told with the inside knowledge of a man at the centre of events, yet with the limited vision of a contemporary, the naïveté of a small man, groping after understanding with 'the thoughtfulness that is in England and especially in the Army, in these days of seeking'. Mr. Slater, through the observations and heart-searchings of Gilbert Mabbott, has written a thrilling story and made a contribution to the understanding of English history.

A. L. MERSON.

Shorter Notice

ENGLISH SOCIAL SERVICES

Methods and Growth. by Emmeline W. Cohen. (Allen and Unwin, 8*s.* 6*d.*)

THIS book in fact confines itself to examination of a few Social Services only—particularly those concerned with neglected children and the aged poor. Intended to examine 'the relationship between voluntary and public effort', it gives a somewhat sketchy account of the work of some early reformers which peters out into an even more sketchy description of what goes on at present.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FROM THE *LABOUR MONTHLY* OF 25 YEARS AGO

AMERICAN IMPERIALISM SPLITS WORLD TRADE UNIONISM

GOMPERS is finding it necessary, as a part of his regular programme of furthering the interests of American imperialism, to get into the European Labour Movement. This necessity arises from the fact that the invasion of Europe by American imperialism, of which the Dawes Plan is the first big step, requires that Gompers and Company, who stand at the head of the Labour department of American imperialism, throw their restraining influence into the European Labour Movement which is stirring with revolutionary ferment. . .

It is unlikely that Gompers will form any new international . . . But it is his first manœuvre to re-enter the International Federation of Trade Unions, known as the Amsterdam International.

However, Gompers will seek before entering Amsterdam to drive it to the Right and to prevent the admission of the 6,500,000 revolutionary unionists of Russia. . . He will seek to force Amsterdam to drop even its Socialist phraseology, and to adopt, as a concession to him, even more reactionary policies.

But once inside of Amsterdam, Gompers will have three objectives. First, to organise and strengthen the Right Wing against the Left Wing. Second, to prevent the admission to Amsterdam of the revolutionary unions of Soviet Russia and the unity of the Amsterdam organisation under the Red International of Labour Unions. Third, as a matter of customary adherence to the policy of the American Government, Gompers will make war relentlessly on Soviet Russia.

(William Z. Foster, in The World of Labour, January, 1925.)

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

For them the Ceylon diver held his breath
And went all naked to the hungry shark,

while at the same time at home:

. . . for them alone did seethe
A thousand men in troubles wild and dark;
Half-ignorant, they turn'd an easy wheel
That set sharp racks at work, to pinch and peel.

It is a lesson still being learnt all too slowly here in Britain. But those who learn it find instant and generous response among the colonial peoples who have learnt where to look for friends and allies at home and abroad. A Malayan reader, endorsing vigorously what we have written about Nehru, reminds us how in 1938 he had promised support to the Malayan people 'when they should fight imperialism'. Now he comes out ever more openly to declare that he will aid the imperialists to crush the Malayan Democrats fighting against imperialism'. From South Africa, a little late in renewing his subscription, a reader writes: 'I have been preoccupied—mentally and financially—with the struggle against the vicious Malan régime; but that is a bad excuse for neglecting my subscription, because your magazine is a first-rate stimulant in that struggle'.

ARDUOUS, BUT NOBLE

Finally, here is a letter of deep interest, not the least for its associations with the pioneers of Socialism in Britain, from a veteran Marxist, who is also a most distinguished academic figure. For many years he was well known in the Social-Democratic Federation and the British Socialist Party and was an attendant at the birth of the Communist Party here in 1920. Now, living in Moscow, he writes in appreciation of *Labour Monthly*: 'It is soundly Marxist and well written. R.P.D.'s Notes of the Month are particularly good and often when I read them my hands itch for applause. You have an uphill fight—very arduous, but noble, and I doubt not that success will ultimately crown your efforts and sacrifices'. Nor could we doubt it, when we have daily proof of the steadfastness of our old friends and the fighting qualities of the new. I am thinking for example of a letter from a Lanarkshire miner who has just taken out a subscription; a 75-years-old pensioner from Paisley who writes: 'It is a superb magazine. Notes of the Month are unsurpassable and all the articles are good. Long life to it!' and a demobbed sergeant now at a University. Then there is the letter from an active Labour Party member in Devon who finds it 'a great help'. Just how great is the Labour movement's need for the help of Marxism was well brought out by this reader from East Anglia, who, after describing a lively argument with three building trade workers, comments: 'The Labour Government has done much more than succeed in confusing the workers. It has given many of them a capitalist mentality. Well, it makes you think. My reaction was, but for the *Labour Monthly*, there probably go I. Power to your elbow!'

THEIR NARROW, DOOMED WORLD

Many have praised the splendid December special number with those remarkable writings of Stalin published in English for the first time. And there

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Continued from page 48

has been a lot of comment, too, on the other works we have provided for the first time here: the letters of Lenin, the correspondence between Kautsky and Plekhanov, and of the historic Chinese 'Common Programme'. There is nothing new, of course in *Labour Monthly* readers having been given extraordinary advantages of this kind. For example, I see that in the December number of 1921 we published Lenin's famous article on the New Economic Policy—long before it was obtainable elsewhere in England. Well, it takes some people—and bourgeois historians not the least—a whole era to catch up on history being made. Indeed, one symptom that their narrow world is doomed is that they never do catch up.

BACK IN THE GUN TURRETS

It seems now that there may be more space for you and me in this column. Recently 'Exeter' wrote: 'We like to read the expressions of life and hope and solidarity flashing out from the imperialist caves and dugouts remaining to reaction. But we note that money is tight and that in these hard times you are anxiously wondering how many more 'Leicesters' there will be who cannot maintain their guarantee'. So then 'Exeter' sent a donation and joined the others who have been holding the fort for the Leicester man whom unemployment forced temporarily to suspend his 5s. guarantee, some months ago. And as you will see below, yet another defender came forward during November. But here's news! When the December figures are published that entry 'Holding the fort for Leicester' will no longer appear. Because 'Leicester' himself writes: 'Happily, with the enclosed 5s. postal order, I am able to tell you that I can return to my position at the gun turrets in the hope that I may be able to hit the imperialist target with a few well aimed literary shells! Wishing you every success at the loading station'. Move over for 'Leicester', there! and will Gunners H.G.B., R. Wrightson, Joan Tuckett, 'Exeter' and M. B. Laverty please note that they are Mentioned in Despatches? And now, please, everybody, fire away, remembering that in the New Year we shall need more than the November total of

£53 5s. 0d.

Regular contributors were:
D. M. Clarke, 10s; D. Mayo, 8s; H.G.B., 2s; L. Rowan, 6s; A.W.K., £10; J. Macdonald, 4s; Royston Green, 3s 6d; Cambridge C.P., £1 4s; H.S.M., 2s 6d; R.F.B., £3; L'Humanité 3s; C.B., Bristol, 1s 6d; Malayan Student, 10s; R. McLeod, 5s; Mrs. C. Kennedy, 2s 6d; T.W.R., £2 8s; H. Zinkler, 5s; O. Greene, £2; S. Morrissy, 10s; D. H. Strathern and Friends, 5s; H. N. Humphreys, 3s 6d; T. Flood, 2s 6d; G. J. Harrison, 5s; A. Elliott, 6s; F. Renouf, 5s; J. and K. Ekevall, 2s 6d; Director, £2; Socialist Sailor, £1; D.M., 6s; P. N. Brinson, 10s; J. A. Purton, 7s. 6d.

Other contributions include:
W. Scobell, 8s; R. Weare, 8s; H. Rosen, 8s; I. Ap Nicholas, 8s; D. E. Williams, £1; R. F. Willetts, 8s; D.B., 12s; J. A. P. Hall, 2s 6d; D. A. Hamilton, 8s; John Murphy, £1 10s; E.A.C., Horsham, 5s; G. H. Schaffer, 6s; N. Shaw, 2s; M. Rickard, 8s; J. R. Lansley, 8s; Anon., 8s; H. Laithwaite, £1 8s; A. M. B. Smith, 8s; H. Horinsky, 8s; G. M. Bussy, 8s; J. W. Milton, 8s; F.S.R., £1 1s; J. Tuckett, 2s; D.B.H., 12s; D. J. Mc Veigh, 8s; B. Becker, 8s; L. Blott, 8s; H. F. List, 10s; B. Berman, 5s; A. Singer, 15s; H. Martin, 8s; R. Pollock, 8s; G. Callicott, 8s; R. Herring, 3s; T. Murray, 2s 6d; C. Penn, 18s; A. W. Gombeer, 3s; S. T. Puzey, 9s; Anon., Southend, 8s; A. Peters, 8s; P. Gathercole, 5s; W. Roberton, 4s; "Surrey Reader," £2; Anon., 2s 6d; H. J. Knight, 4s; C. Wrench, 3s; M. Mackenzie, 4s; S. Dean, 2s 6d; R. Lawson, 18s; K. B. Kay, 4s; G. J. R. Hill, 3s; R. J. Rose, 3s; I. Stead, 4s; R.J.A. (U.S.A.), £1 1s; "Virginia" (U.S.A.), 10s; M. B. Laverty, holding the fort for "Leicester," 5s.

Our thanks to you all. ANGELA TUCKETT.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEW CHINA'S 'COMMON PROGRAMME'

Full Text, **Price 3d.**

from

Central Books, 2 Parton Street, London, W.C.1.

OF LASTING VALUE

(1) There ARE no Aryans, by R. Page Amot.
Race Theories exposed.
Price 6d.

(2) The Political Foundations of Karl Marx, by Roy Pascal.
An original study.
Price 1s.

From The Manager,
"Labour Monthly",
134 Ballards Lane, London, N.3

'FIGHT THE CRISIS —MARX v. KEYNES'

Conference of especial interest to trade unionists and economists. Beaver Hall (near Mansion House Stn.), London, E.C.4. Saturday, January 7th, 1950, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Conference will be opened by J. R. Campbell, Chairman of Economic Sub-committee of Communist Party. Admission by Party card.

URGENTLY NEEDED
Back numbers of SOVIET NEWS for *Labour Monthly Editorial Library*:
Nos. 1401, 1405, 1406, 1410, 1411
Spare copies gratefully received by The Editorial Dept., Labour Monthly, 134 Ballards Lane, N.3.

THE HISTORY OF 1949

'Labour Monthly' bound volume for 1949 provides just that. A few are still available, price £1. Complete set of loose copies, if in good condition, exchanged for a bound volume at 8s. 6d.

Order Immediately

from

The Manager, 'Labour Monthly', 134 Ballards Lane, London, N.3.

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

To Labour Monthly, 134 Ballards Lane, London, N.3.

NAME .....
(Please use Block Capitals)

ADDRESS .....

.....

I wish to become a postal subscriber to LABOUR MONTHLY and enclose 12/- (Home) $3.00 (U.S.A. and Canada), 13/- (Elsewhere Overseas) to cover 12 months' subscription beginning with the

.....issue.

Signed .....

Date .....

Published by the Proprietors, The Trinity Trust, 134, Ballards Lane, London, N.3, and printed by Dorchester and District Newspapers, Ltd. (T.U.), Dorchester, Great Britain

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED